# THE FREEMAN BOOK

EDITED BY

ALBERT JAY NOCK

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ALBERT JAY NOCK

# The Freeman Book

Typical editorials,
essays, critiques, and other
selections from the eight
volumes of the *Freeman*
1920–1924

NEW YORK B. W. HUEBSCH, INC. MCMXXIV

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# The Freeman

March 17, 1920—March 5, 1924.

Founded by HELEN SWIFT NEILSON

THE following were associated in the editorial conduct and production of the *Freeman* during its four years or a considerable part of that period:

Francis Neilson
Albert Jay Nock
B. W. Huebsch
Van Wyck Brooks
Suzanne La Follette
Walter G. Fuller
Geroid Tanquary Robinson
Emilie A. McMillan
Harold Kellock
William MacDonald
Lucie D. Taussig
Helen McLeod

# AN EXPLANATION

The laudable ambition to compress the best of eight volumes into one book of conventional length proved impossible of adequate fulfillment. Of the thousands who read and loved the *Freeman* none will agree with the selection here presented; but none who tries to prove how much better he could have done the job will withhold sympathy from the one who undertook the task.

It seemed wise to omit most contributions of transitory interest, to choose with a view to variety of subjects, and to give fair representation to the editors, to whom the *Freeman's* unique flavor was due, and to the more frequent contributors. After a careful distillation of the *Freeman's* 208 numbers, those pieces that simply *had* to go into the book proved to be sufficiently numerous to make exactly four volumes of the size of this one. Distillation was no longer a useful process: no course remained but to pour the liquid away. Almost all long articles went; poetry followed; favorites among middle articles, reviews and editorials splashed on the ground.

Here is what is left! Some of the *Freeman's* highly valued writers are not even represented; and in justice to them it must be admitted that much that was abandoned was as good as what is here offered.

The compiler would "fain retreat with frustration and a baffle," and remains only long enough to mention that but for the diligence of Emilie A. McMillan who, during the four years of the *Freeman's* life, seems to have memorized its contents, this enterprise (none of whose shortcomings are to be attributed to her), would not have been carried through.

B. W. H.

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by Suzanne LaFollette

"THE remark of a newspaper-correspondent that the work of the Democratic Convention was being guided by a well-balanced mind, reminded this paper of Artemus Ward's old partner in the showbusiness."
by Albert Jay Nock

"THESE are the days that try the stoutest burlap in which cats were ever bagged."
by Walter G. Fuller

"IF this paper could get its readers to sit down in front of this one proposition—that the costs of war can not be shifted sidewise—we should have done a thing or two for the cause of international peace."
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"GREAT as a teacher, great as a citizen, great as a friend, great as a Christian, above all, great as a man; such was James, Cardinal Gibbons."
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“WE wish some one would do for this people what Mr. Edgar Crammond did for the English the other day, when before the Bankers’ Institute he figured out that the British people had to work four months out of the year to support their Government.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“SOME zealous patrioteer or patriotrine, it appears, recently criticized the Orpheus Choir of Glasgow for not singing the English national anthem at its concerts.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“THE *Brooklyn Eagle* reports that Senator Knox, on his arrival in Paris, 11 September, said that our next war, a war of commercial competition with England, has already begun.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“REPEATEDLY and eloquently, Mr. H.G. Wells has called his readers’ attention to the fact that during the last century and a half, man’s ingenuity in the invention of machines has far outrun his spiritual ability to control and use these machines for his own good.”
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

“WE are in receipt of some remonstrances from friends abroad who themselves cautiously favour the Irish cause, saying that we do not understand conditions in Ireland and that if we did understand them, we

would be less partisan."
by Albert Jay Nock

"ONCE more, say the head-lines, the senators of Cambridge University have 'grappled with the woman problem,' and once more they have denied the wisdom of certain principles to which the Lord adhered when the world was in the making."
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

"THE rage for amending the Constitution will presently leave the poor old document hardly enough of the original fabric to hold the darns.
by Albert Jay Nock

"HORACE GREELEY, the venerable founder of the *New York Tribune*, wrote a scandalously bad hand."
by Albert Jay Nock

"NOT long ago, chance brought before us a melancholy prospect which we have since endeavoured unsuccessfully to forget."
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

"THE four-Power treaty has been ratified; and now the Powers concerned may proceed to do precisely what they would do if it had not been ratified."
by Albert Jay Nock

"IN 'Erewhon' Samuel Butler portrayed a society that had achieved a measure of freedom and graciousness by smashing all its machines."
by Harold Kellock

"WHEN once an idea is really liberated upon the world, it will make its way without let or help."
by Albert Jay Nock

"AS we read the news of another lynching, it occurs to us that the violent attack of race upon race is perhaps the supreme futility of life."
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

“WHEN President Hopkins of Dartmouth remarked the other day that ‘too many men are going to college,’ he might with equal propriety have said that: there are too many human beings on the face of the earth.”
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

“WE say, and are prepared to maintain against all argument or cavil, that woman is the superior sex, and that in doing things the right way, the everlastingly fit and appropriate way, she can take the shine out of man every time, and leave him looking like Confederate money.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“THERE seems to be a general superstition that people who have once enjoyed the privilege of exploiting the labour of their fellows, and themselves have neither toiled nor spun, have somehow a valid claim to be supported in the style to which they are accustomed.”
by Suzanne LaFollette

“LATELY we have heard it said several times that ‘Russia’ brought on the great war, and we have been wondering what idea lies back of this expression.”
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

“NEW YORK is in the throes of one of its periodical ebullitions of the unco’ guid.”
by Harold Kellock

“‘GOVERNMENT,’ remarked the *New York World* recently, in the course of a reproof directed at this paper for its scepticism concerning the League of Nations, ‘will continue on this earth whether there is capitalism, communism or the single tax.’”
by Suzanne LaFollette

“SPEAKING of imperialism, we note that Admiral Chester is somewhat aroused about the marked lack of enthusiasm displayed by the American people over his fat concession in Asia Minor, which has engendered such hostility among British and French privilegees interested in the

same territory.”
by Harold Kellock

“THE salvaging of the country newspaper is much on the conscience of college professors who attempt to give instruction in journalism, and certainly it is high time that attention were drawn to the job.”
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

## II. Editorials

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Anglo-American Relations, by Albert Jay Nock

To Whom it May Concern, by Albert Jay Nock

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Toadstools, by Albert Jay Nock

In Behalf of Religion, by Albert Jay Nock

## III. Miscellany

“THE effect of Brieux’s play, ‘La Robe Rouge,’ done in New York under the title ‘The Letter of the Law,’ was to make me once more try to analyze the vague dissatisfaction and irritation that one feels against the propagandist and all his works and ways.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“HERE is an interesting turn of human nature. Grandi, a carpenter, elected recently to the Italian Parliament as a revolutionary Socialist, went into the Chamber the day before the opening session, to have a look round and see what it was like.”
by Francis Neilson

“WHO will begin to comb and collate the material that will serve the scholars of 2020 A.D. who will write the cultural history of America?”
by B.W. Huebsch

“I HAVE been standing before Rodin’s ‘Hand of God,’ that marvellous portrayal of the first embrace, the primeval kiss, as God, in a moment of joy, tenderly created man and woman.”
by Francis Neilson

“IS there not something significant about the fact that censorship of books and plays, as practised in English-speaking countries, had its origin in the king’s fool?”
by B.W. Huebsch

“CYNICAL observers who profess to be puzzled at what form of compensation the frustrated impulse towards the drinking of strong liquor will take might profitably study the actions of the crowd at a baseball game. “
by Harold Stearns

“MIDDLE-AGED students of the high cost of living must sometimes think longingly of the good old days of the free-lunch counter; when for a few cents and a trifle of cheek one could enjoy a hearty meal in any

first-class hotel on Broadway.
by Francis Neilson

“ONE of the kindliest souls that ever tapped a conductor’s desk was Louis Saar, who for years was with the Metropolitan and Covent Garden.”
by Francis Neilson

“IN his amazing autobiography ‘Steeplejack’ Mr. Huneker tells a story of a corn-cutter at Bayreuth who, when questioned by the redoubtable and curious James as to what kind of a looking man Wagner was, replied that he was a little bow-legged Jew who always wore a long cloak to hide his crooked legs.”
by Francis Neilson

“BEING fond of cultivated beauty, I find the South County of Rhode Island—the stretch between Westerly and Wickford—quite the loveliest sight that the country can furnish; or, no, strictly speaking, my allegiance wavers between that and the county of Sussex, in New Jersey.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“MR. JAMES HUNEKER little knows what a flood of memories of old New York his volume ‘Steeplejack’ has let loose, in my mind; nor does he know, and I do not either, where they will run to.”
by Francis Neilson

“I WONDER if the Irish Free State will set up a monument to or even write the epitaph of James Fintan Lalor.
by Padraic Colum

“IT was the Persian delegate at Geneva, it seems, who told the League of Nations the simple truth about itself.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“I SEE that Mr. Henry L. Mencken has been offering a philosophic consideration of prohibition which is worth attention.”
by Harold Kellock

“PROBABLY I ought to be ashamed to confess that I waited until my maturity to read a novel by one of the Brontes.”
by B.W. Huebsch

“SEEING Mr. Cyril Maude in his excellent new comedy, ‘Aren’t We All?’ gives one a hint of the distance that we have already gone towards civilizing our conception of marriage.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“THE Londoners are now paying honour to the memory of Dick Whittington, ‘thrice Lord Mayor of London,’ who died five hundred years ago.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“I HAVE not yet girded myself up to see many plays of the new crop.”
by Albert Jay Nock

“THE other evening, I paid my respects to a friend who had just returned from Washington, and found her in a somewhat caustic mood.”
by Geroid Tanquary Robinson

“CHARLES BEARD, the historian, has mentioned to me the humorous idea of potting a lot of obituary-notices from the daily press and working them up into a kind of anthology of vacuity and blather.”
by Albert Jay Nock

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# CURRENT COMMENT

ACCORDING to the chief of police of Waterbury, Connecticut, and also according to the New York *Times*, certain aliens whom Mr. Louis F. Post would not allow deported, have returned to their haunts in Waterbury; which is press-glossary for the mild and unexhilarating statement that they went home. When Mr. Rockefeller or Mr. Gary or even some more obscure member of the God-fearing middle class, leaves his place of business for his place of residence, he goes home; but when one of Mr. Palmer's best assorted is somehow seined out of the unwarranted jurisdiction of the Department of Justice, he slinks back to his haunt. "Wide is the range of words," says Homer, "words can make this way or that way." At what stage in political coloration, between a liberal mauve and a communistic red, does a person cease to go and begin to slink; at what stage does his residence cease to be his home and become his haunt?

S. L. F. 16. vi. 20.

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THE remark of a newspaper-correspondent that the work of the Democratic Convention was being guided by a well-balanced mind, reminded this paper of Artemus Ward's old partner in the show-business, whose name was Billson:

"Billson," says I, "You hain't got a well-balanced mind." "Yes, I have, old hoss-fly," he says (he was a low cuss), "Yes, I have. I've got a mind that balances in any direction the public rekwires, and that's what I calls a well-balanced mind."

Artemus adds:

The mis'rable man played "Hamlet" once in a theatre where there wasn't any orkestry, and wishin' to perish to slow music, he died playin' on to a claironette himself, interspersed with hart-rendin' groans.

There is something about this, too, that somehow makes one think of the Democratic Convention, though perhaps one could not say just why.

A. J. N. 7. vii. 20.

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THESE are the days that try the stoutest burlap in which cats were ever bagged. Hardly a day passes but some awkward little truth slips out into the air and is caught by industrious pencils and then, after many hazardous adventures, ending up in a linotype machine, is born again; this time on fresh clean strips of paper which go out into all the ways of the world. Those precious moments when we meet

face to face these wandering bits of truth, are fit to be treasured through a long life. Thus at Butte, Montana, a few days ago, the hills must have rejoiced and the mountains and valleys been exceeding glad when Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt said:

> The Republicans are playing a shell game on the American people. They are still busy circulating the story that [in the League of Nations] England has six votes to America's one. It is just the other way. As a matter of fact, the United States has about twelve votes in the Assembly. Until last week I had two of them myself, and now Secretary Daniels has them. You know I have had something to do with the running of a couple of little republics. The facts are that I wrote Haiti's Constitution myself, and, if I do say it, I think it is a pretty good Constitution.

Mr. Roosevelt went on to say that Haiti, Santo Domingo, Panama, Cuba, and the other Central American countries, which have at least twelve votes in the League's Assembly, all regarded Uncle Sam as a guardian and big brother, and that this country practically would have their votes in the League. Now why, in the name of goodness, didn't President Wilson tell us that himself long ago, and so have saved us all this bother?

Think now for a moment of how it will be when the League of Nations holds its first meeting with Uncle Sam joining in. All the nations will be there. The representatives of England and her five self-governing dominions enter the great hall together (the Labour premier of Australia and the Nationalist premier of South Africa casting sinister glances at the gentleman from Downing Street). Suddenly just outside the Assembly-hall the sound of a sharp military command is heard. It is Captain W. W. Gilmer, of the United States Marines, until lately Governor of Guam, calling to attention the round dozen of diplomats representing Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt's little Republics. "Now, then," he says briskly, "you fellows have got to do as you're told and don't you forget it. No whistling here, you from Guam! Attention!—forward march!" And with fine military precision the little company walks in to take its place in the great Assembly of the Nations.

W. G. F. I. ix. 20.

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IF this paper could get its readers to sit down in front of this one proposition —that the costs of war can not be shifted *sidewise*—we should have done a thing or two for the cause of international peace. Indeed, we despair of doing very much in any other fashion. We do not believe that the war-spirit

is a kind of free balloon that can be readily shot down with argument. To our way of thinking, militarism is a very substantial and well-foundationed structure, built by three sorts of men; men who know their business and who profit roundly by the work, men who enjoy the work for its own sake, and men who are fooled or forced into helping the professional profiteers and patriots with their little job. There is no use trying to prove that war is always unprofitable and unpleasant for all the parties concerned. Anyone who attempts such a proof will get tangled up with the wartime record of new limousine-licenses, the applications of monopolists for concessions in conquered territory, the militant resolutions of American Legionaries who wanted to hurry back from the Rhine in order to “jump off” once again at the Rio Grande. For our own part, we have nothing to say to these people who have had a try at war and found it suited to their taste or serviceable to their pocketbooks.

It is to the lesser folk who are decoyed or drafted into the military proletariat that we should like to talk; and here we interest ourselves rather in showing what war *costs*, than in showing what it *is*. Artists like Tolstoy, Garshin, Latzko and Barbusse have developed the moral method to perfection, sometimes with no conscious purpose other than that of literary creation, often with the full intention of painting the screaming horrors of the battlefield so vividly that anyone who reads will recoil from the reality of war. We are bound to believe that this realistic treatment of war has accomplished something; and yet we can not forget that the very men who actually witness these horrors are often little affected by them. Indeed most people learn easily to look with indifference upon the agonies of others, and there is always a consoling chance that the individual himself will escape injury. The economic effects of war are a different matter. They are more widespread and more persistent than the physical dangers of the conflict can be under any circumstances; and more important still, the economic burdens outlast the conflict, and have to be lugged along through years of peace-time disillusionment and hard work, when war itself has taken on a tint of romance in spite of the best efforts of the realists. In the present instance, the educational value of this economic burden-bearing can be neutralized only by the persistence of the belief that by some kind of jugglery German colonies and German credits can be made to give substantial relief to the Allied peoples. Armies can no longer live off the enemy’s country, or

conquerors live at the expense of the conquered. Modern warfare imposes burdens which all the participants together can hardly carry; any smoke-screen thrown up around this fact reeks of a militarism more dangerous than all the old sword-rattling of Potsdam.

G. T. R. 23. iii. 21.

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GREAT as a teacher, great as a citizen, great as a friend, great as a Christian, above all, great as a man; such was James, Cardinal Gibbons. He had in his person the talent that Joubert acutely pointed out as inhering in the Church he served, the talent for making himself loved. He recommended the religion of Jesus Christ to men in the only way it can be effectively recommended to them, by treating them as Jesus would have treated them if He had been in his place; by pureness, by kindness, by love unfeigned. He was one of the most simple-hearted, pious and Christian men that ever filled an episcopal chair. In the midst of a careless and perverse generation, he walked worthily; when all about him was at the utmost variance with the principles of true religion, he remained sincere and humble and patient. By living the life of the righteous, he earned the death of the righteous; his life manifested the beauty of holiness and his death the peace of perfect assurance. *Expectat resurrectionem mortuorum et vitam venturi sæculi*.

A. J. N. 6. iv. 21.

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AT the review of the Grand Fleet at Hampton Roads the other day, the breaking waves dashed high, and President Harding rode upon the crest of them, singing a song of sea-power. We can hardly blame the President for having felt uplifted. With submarines nosing up out of the ocean, and dirigibles hiding the sun; with seaplanes zooming past the Mayflower’s mast-head, and the continuous cannonading of the dreadnaughts fairly drowning the strains of the “Star-Spangled Banner,” it must have been a fine business altogether, and enough to upset anybody. Maybe Mr. Harding did not mean anything at all, then, when he addressed the following immortal words to the officers of the fleet: “The United States does not want anything on earth not rightfully our own—no territories, no payment

of tribute; but we want that which is righteously our own, and, by the eternal, we mean to have that." If this really does mean something, then, by the eternal, we should like to know what it is that is righteously our own, and is yet so much some one else's that we have to have the biggest navy on earth to haul it home for us.

G. T. R. 11. v. 21.

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THERE is a sharp and pungent quality that is very pleasing to our taste in the recent protest of the British Association of Schoolmasters against the continuance of the teaching profession in England as a sweated trade. The Association's statement points out that the latest scale of salaries awarded to schoolmasters in government schools "gave men of nineteen years' service about £2.15.0 per week in pre-war values." The Government is now proposing a further twenty per cent cut on all educational expenditures, and this at a time, the Association points out, when the Government is spending £170,000 to pay for the decking out in scarlet uniforms of the five regiments of the Guards, to say nothing of £24,000,000 for a military expedition in Mesopotamia. One result of the British Government's policy of starving education is that men are no longer becoming schoolteachers. Last year, in all England, only 803 young men entered the Government's service as schoolmasters. But perhaps, after all, there is a method in the general preference of all governments for military rather than educational expenditures, for what is the use, our rulers may well ask, of spending money to develop a child's brains when at the same time you are spending so much to blow them out.

W. G. F. 17. viii. 21.

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WE wish some one would do for this people what Mr. Edgar Crammond did for the English the other day, when before the Bankers' Institute he figured out that the British people had to work four months out of the year to support their Government. This statistical scheme of reducing governmental costs to an expression in terms of a labour-equivalent, is striking and effective. Perhaps something like it has been done in this country, but if so, it has escaped us. The American citizen is, as far as his

Government is concerned, about as spiritless a drudge as Canning's needy knife-grinder; still, we believe if he were shown that he works one-sixth of his time or even one-twelfth—let alone one-third, as the Englishman does—to support such government as he gets, he might decide that it ain't worth it. We might figure it out for him ourselves, perhaps, but we are not good at figures, and it would be a laborious job, so we will content ourselves with remarking that it should be done. This sufficiently vindicates our character and our reputation for public spirit, and is much easier than doing all that dismal arithmetic.

A. J. N. 14. ix. 121.

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SOME zealous patrioteer or patriotrine, it appears, recently criticized the Orpheus Choir of Glasgow for not singing the English national anthem at its concerts. The conductor had enough Scots pluck to get his back up and make an extremely spirited reply, saying that it would be just as suitable to charge the choir with anti-Socialism because it did not sing "The Red Flag." As a matter of fact, he declared, neither the national anthem nor "The Red Flag" are great songs, and, therefore, however much one may agree with the sentiment of either, neither one has any place in a concert. "Thus we sing the music of the Greek and Roman churches because it is great music; no one suggests that we subscribe to their tenets. . . . Music knows no frontiers and no politics." This is something like! If a few orchestra-conductors in this country had possessed this worthy Scotsman's grit and gumption, the music-loving ones among us might fortunately have been spared one of the minor horrors of the late war.

A. J. N. 28. ix. 21.

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THE Brooklyn *Eagle* reports that Senator Knox, on his arrival in Paris, 11 September, said that our next war, a war of commercial competition with England, has already begun. He remarked that we have handed our rival ten billion dollars to insure an even start, and that all America now asks is fair play. It is reassuring to hear from some one in our public life a frank statement of our situation. Most people seem to imagine that the war is over; the fact is, however, as Senator Knox says, it has just begun. The war

of blood and iron was a mere episode, which had only the effect, as this paper has long been pointing out, of shifting the world's centre of economic rivalry. It has put the United States in the place of Germany as England's chief economic competitor. The sooner we all become aware of this, the better; the more coolly and frankly we measure its implications and consequences, the better. There is precious little importance attaching to opinions about "the next war"; the important thing is that we are in it at this moment, up to our necks, and can not possibly get out until one side or the other succumbs to a good sound whaling—or the present system of privilege and exploitation is blown to atoms like the horse and cart in the Wall Street explosion.

We do not see how anyone in his right mind can doubt this fact, and we urge merely that our fellow-citizens should recognize it as candidly as Senator Knox does. A conflict of imperialist nationalism may be justifiable, and again it may not. The one unjustifiable thing is that of going into any conflict with one's eyes shut. Senator Knox further remarked that "peoples don't fight peoples; Governments fight Governments." Precisely. It may be worth while for the people of this country to be dragged into the battle of imperialism with the people of England, and again it may not. For our part, we think it is not worth while. But we insist that this is not a debatable question. What we insist upon is the arrant folly of humbugging oneself about the facts of our status. For years the people of England humbugged themselves royally with the idea that they could dance to the tune of economic imperialism without ever paying the piper, and it is highly important that the people of this country should not succumb to a similar notion. Since our feet have already begun to fly to the same attractive tune, well and good; but let us not pretend that we are having all this fun gratis and that there will be no bill.

A. J. N. 28. ix. 21.

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REPEATEDLY and eloquently, Mr. H. G. Wells has called his readers' attention to the fact that during the last century and a half, man's ingenuity in the invention of machines has far outrun his spiritual ability to control and use these machines for his own good. The idea is at least as old as the early writings of Robert Owen, and the demonstrations of it are renewed

each day with the rising of the sun and the going down thereof. A particularly striking example is that to which the country is to be treated on Armistice Day, when President Harding delivers at Arlington Cemetery an oration which will be heard by an audience in the amphitheatre there, and by thousands of other Americans gathered about amplifying telephones in various halls in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and other cities. Such an impressive magnification of the trivial reminds us of a statement that we heard lately—that chewing-gum is the most permanent substance that our society produces.

G. T. R. 26. x. 21.

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WE are in receipt of some remonstrances from friends abroad who themselves cautiously favour the Irish cause, saying that we do not understand conditions in Ireland and that if we did understand them, we would be less partisan. The complaint against our ignorance is probably just. We are a long way from Ireland and can not pretend, never have pretended, to native knowledge of conditions there. We assume that our readers are aware of this, and aware also that we do the best we can in the matter of the dependability of what we print. We take leave to think, further, that our mistakes, if any, are extremely few and unimportant.

Against the rest of the complaint, however, we must enter a vigorous *caveat*. We can see freedom in only one light; that is, as something not to be compromised with or watered down. We firmly decline to enter into the devious and slippery ways of casuistry upon this point. For us, freedom is freedom, absolutely and world without end; and we refuse to be distracted by the contemplation of any sort of *Ersatz* or Brummagem freedom that may be recommended as working quite as well as the genuine and serving no end of wholesome collateral purposes besides. We are suspicious and pessimistic, incorrigibly so, towards anything of the kind. We see the Irish simply as a body of men and women, probably much like ourselves, and like folks generally, neither better no worse, but who want to be free; and we are unalterably for them, as we are for any similar body of men and women anywhere in the world. What they will do with their freedom is no concern of ours; it is no concern, in our judgment, of anybody. We have no roseate illusions on the subject. If the South ever oppresses Ulster, we shall

be for Ulster. If Dail Eireann grows imperialistic and grabs the Isle of Man or Iceland, we shall be uncompromisingly for the Manxmen or the Icelanders. At present, however, we see Ireland only as demanding freedom from political domination by an alien race; and wherever freedom is demanded, be it political, social or economic, we are there unreservedly, and without asking any questions, to back that demand to the utmost of our slender abilities.

A. J. N. 26. x. 21.

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ONCE more, say the head-lines, the senators of Cambridge University have "grappled with the woman problem," and once more they have denied the wisdom of certain principles to which the Lord adhered when the world was in the making. That is to say, they have decided to maintain at the University a degree of exclusiveness which has no counterpart anywhere in the world of organic matter, except where man has set up some kind of a barrier against nature. It is this sort of meddling that makes woman a problem, just as discrimination always makes a problem of the group against which it is enforced. If the University at Cambridge would accept the world as the Lord made it, women would be rated as plain, ordinary, human beings, and would eventually come to be regarded as such by undergraduates of the male persuasion.

As it is, the youthful collegian is taught to look upon woman as a queer confection, with qualities quite distinct from those which one expects to discover in one's male acquaintances and friends. He simply does not expect to find her companionable, in the sense that his male associates are companionable; and thus his relations with women are distorted from the very beginning by a wholly artificial emphasis on sex, and he is prepared for a grand affair with some young woman who would bore him intolerably if the element of biological attraction were lacking. In the case of women, the result of artificial segregation is likely to be very much the same; nor is there any final safeguard against resultant difficulties. However, it seems to us that the environment in which men and women are most likely to develop a semi-rational attitude towards each other as individual human beings, and not as mass-problems, is an environment in which association is as free and casual as nature seems to have intended it to be.

G. T. R. 2. xi. 21.

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THE rage for amending the Constitution will presently leave the poor old document hardly enough of the original fabric to hold the darns. The National Woman's party is now out for another amendment which shall sweep away all remaining vestiges of legal discrimination against women, leaving them free, among other things, to enjoy the same conditions of labour in which the more favoured sex now so joyfully rollicks. For once, these ladies will have the glad surprise of finding every conscienceless and unprincipled employer in the country on their side. State laws now in some measure restrain such employers from exploiting the labour of women to the utmost; and now, if this amendment goes through, these laws will be nullified. We wish that this vigorous sisterhood could find another outlet for its energies; one which, if it led to no more good, would at all events end in less harm. Federal judges find the Constitution accommodating enough as it is.

It takes a great deal of temerity to suggest such a thing, but we can not see that the National Woman's party is likely to work out a much better world for us through its peculiar variant of the class-struggle. To exchange a man's world for a woman's, or a woman's world for a man's, seems hardly worth the trouble. To bring in a human world, on the other hand, is worth any amount of trouble. This paper is always for the under dog, in a general way and *ipso facto;* but to be for the under dog with the sheer resentful purpose of some day making him top dog, is not to the purpose. We do not say, indeed we do not believe, that the National Woman's party has deliberately set itself to this purpose; yet in all its works and ways, it shows itself a little, one may say, class-conscious. Yet if this is so, one must ask oneself in shame and mortification, whose fault is it?

To be heart and soul for labour wherever labour is exploited, which, under the present economic system, is everywhere, but to be dead against a dictatorship of the proletariat; to be strong for capital wherever it is bled by monopoly, which again is everywhere, but to repudiate and reprehend every advantage which capital gains through association with monopoly; to be for men's rights or women's rights, not in virtue of their being men's or women's, but in virtue of their being human rights; to be for women or for

men wherever women or men get in any way the worst of it, but to withstand their encroachments wherever they do not; to resist class-consciousness as one would the devil, whether that consciousness be determined by sex, colour, birth, race or economic status: this probably is the ideal of the human life, and in recommending it to the National Woman's party, we are sadly aware of our own distance from it. Yet our recommendation is a sincere expression of faith, which we hope these ladies will as sincerely accept as such, since one would not waste breath in recommending an unattainable ideal.

A. J. N. 9. xi. 21.

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HORACE GREELEY, the venerable founder of the New York *Tribune*, wrote a scandalously bad hand. There is a story that whenever the *Tribune's* compositors came to a word that they could not decipher, they would simply shovel in "reconstruction" or "the impending crisis," and when the paper came out, no one, not even Mr. Greeley, knew the difference. It seems to us that statesmen must keep the word "moral" up their sleeve, after the fashion of these compositors, and pepper it in wherever they are short of a cliché. For instance, Brother Aristide Briand, in his brilliant speech at the arms-conference the other day, had much to say about "moral disarmament." While the listeners were scratching their heads over this, Brother Hughes, not to be outdone in resonant vacuity by any debonair Frenchman that ever crossed the pond, assured Aristide that "there is no moral isolation for the defenders of right and justice." This, according to a correspondent, is "construed to mean that morally, at least, America could be depended upon to resound to the call of France for aid whenever that country was fighting for liberty and justice." Then, finally, Brother Balfour made it unanimous by remarking that "the moral isolation of France would be a tragedy indeed."

These phrases reminded us of the "centres of moral self-possession" that one of our liberal contemporaries once brought forward as a desideratum, which indeed they may be, if only one knows what they are; and thus by easy stages we are led to ruminate upon the extraordinary and uncanny power of the word *moral*, and upon the extraordinary fondness which statesmen have for it. Its use has long been a part of the technique of

what Mr. Henry L. Mencken calls boob-bumping, i. e., hoodwinking the public; and in spite of hard wear and tear in recent years, it seems as good as ever. Our British brethren, for instance, who really ought to have copyright on it, are urging their aversion to the submarine on moral grounds, and their plea is still taken seriously in some quarters, instead of being roared down at once with shouts of ribald laughter. How marvellously well Artemus Ward knew his public!—how marvellously well he satirized its insatiable gullibility! His letter to an editor, fishing for puffs for his Grate Show, will remain for ever, probably, a model for the statesman. "My show at present consists of three moral Bares, a kangaroo . . . besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts and murderers, etc., ekalled by few and exceld by none." He then urges the editor to "git up a tremenjus excitement in yr. paper 'bowt my onparaleld Show. We must fetch the public sum-how. We must work on their feelins. *Cum the moral on 'em strong."* There, in half a dozen lines, is the statesman's whole stock in trade, and his complete technique of publicity.

A. J. N. 7. xii. 21.

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NOT long ago, chance brought before us a melancholy prospect which we have since endeavoured unsuccessfully to forget. We remember it as a veritable panorama of ruin—a low-lying, sandy shore bordering a great expanse of water that carried upon its surface an infinite weight of dead things, steel ships, anchored side by side in pairs and half-dozens and scores, so many that we did not strain our eyes to count them, locked together and rotting into the sea. If any of our readers is disposed to refresh himself by looking upon this picture, he will find it framed by the shores of Jamaica Bay, on the south shore of Long Island, where, there is every reason to suppose, conditions are still very much what they were not many months ago, when we last blundered down in that direction.

Lacking the leisure or the taste for this adventure, the reader may have recourse to a recent issue of the *Literary Digest*, where he will discover a picture almost as impressive. This time, if our memory serves, the harbour is that of Seattle, and the ships are of an embryonic sort; wooden hulls, with no masts, never finished, but lashed together and left to encumber the waters until they melt into them and disappear. Or, again, the reader may

prefer to seek out in the illustrated supplement of the New York *Times* of Sunday, 4 December, a photograph recently come from France of innumerable fine sailing-ships, anchored together end to end in the River Loire, so many of them, indeed, that in the far distance their naked masts and spars lace together in a web that finally fades into invisibility.

Somehow all this show of abundance and decay reminds us of something that Gogol says in "Dead Souls," about the wealth of a certain landed proprietor named Pliushkin. "One might have searched a long while for a person having so much wheat, flour and so forth, in his storehouse, or possessing so many storerooms, barns, and drying-houses, filled with sheep-skins, dressed and tanned; and having such quantities of linen, cloth, dried fish and dried vegetables at his disposal. . . . But what was the use of all these things to Pliushkin? . . . his hay and grain rotted; his ricks and stores of all sorts turned into manure, pure and simple, so that cabbages might have been grown upon them; the flour in his vaults turned to stone, and had to be chopped up; it was terrible to touch the linen, the cloth and other materials of domestic manufacture; they turned to dust under the hand. He himself had already forgotten what he possessed of any given article. . . . Everything finally was piled away in storerooms and rotted, and he himself became at last scarcely human." In short Pliushkin was mad: the inference is inevitable, and our readers may apply it as they will to the Governments that have turned the harbours of the several continents into sink-holes where good ships rot away.

G. T. R. 14. xii. 21.

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THE four-Power treaty has been ratified; and now the Powers concerned may proceed to do precisely what they would do if it had not been ratified.

A. J. N. 5. iv. 22.

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IN "Erewhon" Samuel Butler portrayed a society that had achieved a measure of freedom and graciousness by smashing all its machines. The rapid invasion of radio is giving new significance to his fantastic tale. We are informed that one may purchase a radio set for a few dollars, hitch it to the battery of one's flivver, and distinctly hear London, Paris and Berlin, to

say nothing of Newark and Arlington, screaming their various propagandas across the ether. This new mechanism, it would seem, opens to us a life of endless and appalling horrors. One enters what appears to be an innocent and quiet restaurant, and suddenly at one's ear a tube in the wall begins to emit vapid arguments for a new alliance with some group of international yeggmen, the adoption of the goose-step in common-school curricula, the invasion of Patagonia, the abolition of tobacco, the necessity for a consortium-government for the city of New York, run by altruistic bankers, a proposal for a national bonus of ten billions for railway-magnates and shipowners, or some other enormity. Probably a big factor in the ability of the Russian people to throw off the Tsarist tyranny, was that over four-fifths of them were insulated by illiteracy from the steady current of flim-flam, buncombe, misrepresentation and mendacity that emanates from political government and privilege everywhere. Radio overcomes this insulation, and even illiteracy and physical remoteness no longer protect one. The time is at hand when the most ignorant and isolated peasant will be supplied with as much misinformation on political and economic matters as the ardent reader of the city newspapers.

H. K. 5. iv. 22.

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WHEN once an idea is really liberated upon the world, it will make its way without let or help. Its advocates and adversaries alike might about as well put on their coats and go home, for there is precious little that one can do either to promote or retard its progress. The *Santissimo Salvatore*, who himself liberated the greatest of all ideas upon the world, put it exactly when he said that "the spirit breathes where it will." An idea can not be shot out of existence, or starved out or jailed out, neither can it be knaved out by the technique of political intrigue. That is the point that was consistently overlooked by the brethren who assembled in Paris, Washington, and now at Genoa; that was their little misunderstanding. When they have armies and navies, diplomatic policies, and such-like to deal with, they are quite at home; but when they are confronted with an idea, they are unseeing, helpless and imbecile.

The revolutions of the last century liberated the idea of the individual's right to self-expression in politics; and it prevailed in the long run so

powerfully that this right came to be regarded as the foundation-stone of democracy, until in practice it was proven to have very little indeed to do with democracy. The Russian revolution liberated the idea that democracy is an affair of economics and not of politics; that as long as economic opportunity is controlled by one class, or stratum of society, at the expense of another, there can be no such thing as democracy. Under whatever political system, republican, autocratic or constitutional-monarchist—and under whatever extension of the franchise—those who own, rule, and they rule because they own. They rule in virtue of their control of economic opportunity. Hence, democracy is not promoted, or in any way affected, by a change from one political system to another, but only by a diffusion of ownership. The antithesis of democracy is not autocracy or monarchy, but absolutism. This was the idea which the Russian revolution projected upon the mind of the world, and it entails a wholesale revision of the accepted doctrine of property.

Believers in the omnipotent power of the idea—those few souls who, the world over, have come to learn that in human affairs the Idea is once and for ever the Fact—perceived in 1917 that the Rusian revolution had liberated that idea upon the world; and from that time to this, they have never given themselves a moment's anxiety about any of the transitory phases of the political struggle. They did not worry about the fate of the Soviet Government, the reactionary temper of the Allied Powers, or about the outcome of this or that political powwow. They were aware that nothing depended upon these things; that whether they went this way or that way, their motion could not affect the progress of the idea. Now, after nearly five years, they see that they were right. Politics have run their appointed course so swiftly that now hardly any country has a Government that is either effective at home or respected abroad; and meanwhile the idea has been silently spreading over the face of the whole earth, and striking its roots deeper and deeper into the consciousness of mankind.

A. J. N. 17. v. 22.

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AS we read the news of another lynching, it occurs to us that the violent attack of race upon race is perhaps the supreme futility of life. When the slave assails the master, or the non-possessor takes up arms against the

plutocrat, there is always a chance, however slight, that some good will come out of the contest. The weak can perhaps make themselves stronger; the poor, richer. Power and property can be transferred from man to man, but race can not be so transferred; the race that is attacked and defeated is more race-conscious than ever before. In Texas, white men recently burned three Negroes at the stake for an alleged attack upon a white girl. In Georgia, Negro men discovered that a white man and a Negro woman were maintaining what are known as “improper relations.” The Negroes did not dare to touch the white man, but they lectured the woman on “race purity,” and gave her a sound thrashing. In both cases, the emphasis is on race; but race-difference is a thing that can not be eliminated by any attack that stops short of extermination.

G. T. R. 24. v. 22.

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WHEN President Hopkins of Dartmouth remarked the other day that “too many men are going to college,” he might with equal propriety have said that there are too many human beings on the face of the earth. The opportunities offered by our institutions of higher learning are of a piece with the other opportunities of life, and like these other opportunities, they are of course abused by a considerable proportion of the people who enjoy them. For our own part, we do not in the least sympathize with anyone who laments the loss of pearls cast before swine; we lament only the scarcity of pearls. Instead of assuming that cultural “goods” are necessarily limited in quantity, and should therefore be rationed out (as President Hopkins says of the higher education) to “the aristocracy of brains,” we assume that such goods can and should be multiplied indefinitely, and distributed freely to every one who wants them, with no questions asked. If the economic revolution holds our interest, it is chiefly because we believe that it will open the opportunities of a rich and adventurous cultural life to all sorts and conditions of men, who have, as human beings, a right to share these opportunities and to make of them what use they please.

G. T. R. 4. x. 22.

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WE say, and are prepared to maintain against all argument or cavil, that woman is the superior sex, and that in doing things the right way, the everlastingly fit and appropriate way, she can take the shine out of man every time, and leave him looking like Confederate money. Think, for instance, how long man has been in politics, how long he has been sending his own sex to Congress, how long he has been skirmishing for just the right kind of "senatorial timber." Now comes the very first woman senator, and she is a paragon. She has, apparently, all the essential qualifications, and has them in that degree of pre-eminence, which makes her the ideal and pattern of senatorship for which the blundering male has been looking ever since the august Upper House was established. Thus handily does the superior sex win out in her very first dig for the senatorial woodchuck. The lady in question is the junior senator from Georgia, Mrs. W. H. Felton, appointed to succeed the lamented Tom Watson, and her qualities are set forth in a news-dispatch of 6 October from Cartersville, Georgia, in the New York *Globe*.

To begin with, she is eighty-seven years old. Second, it appears that old age has so freshened and vivified her faculties that "she is still optimistic over the outlook for governmental control in America," quite as a senator should be. Her faith is such that she "believes that we already have good laws and good lawmakers"; and this should abundantly sustain her in the primary senatorial duty of keeping up the barrier against irrational and mischievous discontent. She holds that "the legislation the United States needs most to-day is that gained at the knees of the mothers of America—laws that are greater laws." This phraseology is reminiscent of President Harding, and it rather oversizes our hand—let's have four cards. She is "not exciting herself over such questions as the tariff, the bonus, and the fast-disappearing flapper type of girl," so she may presumably be depended upon to vote right. "Her political creed," says the dispatch, "is stated in these words: 'If only I can aid in making men and women live cleaner, sweeter and more wholesome lives, I shall be well satisfied.'" Georgia has furnished us, at last, the real thing in senators. Georgia henceforth will be the Mother of Senators as Virginia, sah, is the Mother of Presidents. There is no manner of doubt about it.

A. J. N. 18. x. 22.

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THERE seems to be a general superstition that people who have once enjoyed the privilege of exploiting the labour of their fellows, and themselves have neither toiled nor spun, have somehow a valid claim to be supported in the style to which they are accustomed. This is evident, for instance, in the case of deposed monarchs, who, if they escape beheading at the hands of their people, are likely to be generously supported by them; as though, through having battened upon their people for so long, they had thereby earned the right to continue to batten upon them. After every revolution a great amount of sympathy is lavished upon the dislodged privilegees who are forced to turn to and earn an honest living. We have lately seen something of this sort of thing in press-dispatches from Paris telling how titled Russians have been forced to become taxi-drivers or to take jobs in dressmakers' shops. It would be more reasonable, it seems to us, for these aristocrats and their sympathizers to recognize that they had a good steal while it lasted, and a long steal; that it was a bit unfortunate, perhaps, that the deluge should come during their lifetime, but that it was bound to come sometime, and therefore might as well be taken philosophically. We do not doubt that these people deserve sympathy; but we think they deserve it not because they are no longer able to appropriate the labour of others but because, never having been taught to be useful, they find themselves handicapped in competition with people who are better schooled in the business of looking out for themselves.

S. L. F. 15. xi. 22.

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LATELY we have heard it said several times that "Russia" brought on the great war, and we have been wondering what idea lies back of this expression. If "Russia" ever existed, then surely "Russia" still exists; but no one believes that the East-European economic and political organization which helped to bring on the war still exists. A new economic and political organization has replaced the old one, and yet the term "Russia" is still employed as though it had some specific and definable content. As a matter of fact, such terms as this defy any attempt at definition, and yet they are regularly employed as the highest of all categories, and all the manifold

phases of human activity are bracketed under them. “Russia” is reactionary —or revolutionary; “Russia” looks towards the East—or the West; “Russia” is matter-of-fact—or mystical; and so on, and so on everlastingly, as our generalizes attempt, in their easy, breezy way, to simplify a world of a thousand interplaying and overlapping categories, and to lump together as an economic, social, political and intellectual entity, a great number of individuals who represent, among them, every variety of economic, social, political and intellectual life.

G. T. R. 24. i. 23.

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NEW YORK is in the throes of one of its periodical ebullitions of the unco’ guid. Blue crusaders of various shades are raiding Sunday theatrical performances and perpetrating other meddlesome antics, with the idea, apparently, of making the Sabbath as unlivable as possible. In parts of the city one can not dine at a restaurant without suffering the attentions of rum-hunting policemen. Finally, a committee of citizens headed by a Justice of the Supreme Court has organized to force through the State Legislature a law which, as presented in the public prints, would make it a crime to have on one’s bookshelf such things as the poems of William Shakespeare or almost any other of the greater British bards from Chaucer to Swinburne; the works of Rabelais, Cervantes and their followers down to M. Anatole France; much of the classical literature of Greece or Rome; or even the Old Testament.

In our humble opinion, if there is one thing more obscene than printed indecency, it is the uproar of the professional moralists, whether they are flaunting under the noses of their fellow-citizens some exhibit of salacity, or whether they are essaying to extract a filthy significance from something that they have neither the wit nor the cleanliness to understand. It may be that as a result of all this disturbance, the publishing and circulation of classical or European literature will be reduced to the status of bootlegging, and the heady liquors of the Pierian spring will have to be put up in containers that can be carried on the hip.

H. K. 21. iii. 23.

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“GOVERNMENT,” remarked the New York *World* recently, in the course of a reproof directed at this paper for its scepticism concerning the League of Nations, “will continue on this earth whether there is capitalism, communism or the single tax.” This may be true or it may not. There is no way of telling, so far as we know, unless one have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; for this earth has still, presumably, a good many thousand years of life before it, in the course of which even stranger things may happen than the disappearance of government. Whether or not government shall continue to exist, however, seems to this paper a relatively unimportant matter. It is the kind of government that shall continue to exist that really interests us; and we are hopeful enough to believe that the time will come when political government—government which exists to promote the exploitation of the many by the few—will altogether perish from the earth.

During the known period of history, political government has passed through about all of its conceivable forms; and it is clear that the more it has changed the more it has been the same thing, The reason is simple: any political Government is, by its very nature, merely an instrument in the hands of a privileged class, by which that class enforces the expropriation and exploitation of the masses, for its own benefit. For many hundreds of years during the present era, ownership was vested in an aristocracy. During the last hundred years or so, it has largely shifted to the bourgeoisie; and the effect of this shift upon the underlying population was well expressed by Ruskin when he said (we quote from memory), “Bags are on the crags, but it is all the same to Rags, in the valley below.” It is just this that people are beginning dimly to perceive. They are, we think, coming through bitter experience to see that, so long as they are to be mulcted, persecuted, and sent to war, in the interest of a small privileged class, it is really immaterial whether they suffer these things through the agency of an autocrat, a constitutional monarch, or a group of liberal politicians. The days of autocrats and kingly figureheads are about over; and from the prevailing disrespect in which they are held, we are inclined to deduce that the days of politicians of any persuasion are numbered.

The fact is, as this paper has remarked before, that the political game is about played out. Rome perished because its industry could no longer meet the exactions of monopoly and still continue to pay interest and wages. The

present civilization will perish of the same cause unless it is able to affect, without a complete break-down, the transition from a system of monopoly to one of free opportunity. If it is able to effect this transition; if it is able, through whatever means, to abolish private monopoly of natural opportunities; then the political State will disappear with those inequalities which it exists to perpetuate, and such government as is left will be administrative—that is, it will exist solely for the purpose of supervising those activities which can most conveniently be carried on by the community. As we remarked above, we are optimistic enough to believe that such a transition can be effected; that administrative government will supersede political government; that the idea of Society will supersede that of the State. Since this is our hope and belief, we are not unduly depressed over our neighbour's warning that government is bound to continue on this earth.

S. L. F. 2. v. 23.

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SPEAKING of imperialism, we note that Admiral Chester is somewhat aroused about the marked lack of enthusiasm displayed by the American people over his fat concession in Asia Minor, which has engendered such hostility among British and French privilegees interested in the same territory. "Do you want to see European Governments get it away from us?" demanded the Admiral of a reporter of the New York *Globe*. "My interests are American interests. I am fighting for my country." It would be interesting to know just what Admiral Chester means when he says "my country" and "American interests." We wish he would give us an estimate of how many of the no million of his fellow-citizens will benefit, and in what manner, if he and his mysterious financial associates, rather than some British or French group, are permitted to exploit the natural resources and the Turkish population in Asia Minor. If he is fighting for his country in this matter, it is relevant to inquire how many American farm-mortgages will be lifted because of his efforts, and to what extent the general standard of living will be raised. If his concession promises nothing in this line we do not see why his fellow-citizens should be particularly interested in it, especially since they will have to pay for policing the Near East for him,

and, in the event of war, will be compelled to pour out their blood and treasure to defend his enterprises in that quarter of the world.

H. K. 16. v. 23.

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THE salvaging of the country newspaper is much on the conscience of college professors who attempt to give instruction in journalism, and certainly it is high time that attention were drawn to the job. The encroachment of metropolitan papers, with their elaborate news-service, has restricted the field of the rural reporter until it is hardly wider than his own community. In this situation, the local paper is faced with two possibilities. It may give itself over entirely to the publication of local news and gossip, or its editor may accept the opportunity created by the inflow of general news through novel channels, and devote more space than formerly, rather than less, to the interpretation of this news. The rural paper can not compete with the metropolitan daily as a collector and distributor of information and misinformation; but then, on the other hand, the increase in the amount of general news read by the rural population will give the local editor a larger opportunity than he has ever had to discuss the topics of the day with an interested audience. The seasoning of a little horse-sense is exactly what the news requires, and horse-sense, if we are not mistaken, is exactly what our rural brother should be able to contribute.

G. T. R. 26. ix. 23.

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# EDITORIALS

# THE CASE FOR HUMAN NATURE

WHEN the housemaid broke the crock and blamed the cat she created a precedent that has been followed to this day by housemaids of all nationalities. Unfortunately, the precedent has been adopted by servants more highly paid than housemaids as a class are even now apt to be, so that one now finds statesmen, diplomats, and editors resorting to her subterfuge in blaming “human nature” for ruining their pet policies. This expedient for shifting responsibility from the shoulders of political and ecclesiastical rulers, which has been in vogue ever since the day when Aaron cast “the other lot for the scapegoat,” is being challenged on the score of inefficiency, apparently, for it somehow fails to carry off “iniquities unto a land not inhabited.” This system of loading transgressions upon the head of the scapegoat is all very well as a ceremonial, but as a practical method, experience seems to show that it does not by any means come up to the prospectus. It is one thing to put sins on the head of the scapegoat, and quite another thing to make them stick there. The trouble is they do not stick there. They fall off again at once, and the scapegoat goes off about the freedom which he has obtained under scandalously false pretences.

So it has eminently been with the scapegoats of Europe which have been severally sent by the Aarons of this century into the wilderness. They have with such unfailing regularity played hookey that one cannot help feeling that the mechanics of transgression-shirking ought to be revised and brought down to date. From Napoleon and Pitt to Kruger and the Mad Mullah our responsible authorities had invested heavily in a long procession of scapegoats, without receiving any dividends worth talking about: and yet in the autumn of 1914 the undiscouraged high priests of the Allies selected the Kaiser for the journey into the wilderness. Then, when the scapegoat showed an obstinate reluctance against service, they turned their attention temporarily to the head of the House of Hapsburg, and fared no better. Then some genius among them thought of Ferdinand, the autocrat of Bulgaria; and so on from one eligible monarch to another, until they had about exhausted all the material that Europe had in stock. But death and abdication and one accident or another came in to interfere with the due ceremonial proprieties when suddenly, providentially, appeared the real

thing in scapegoats—Lenin! Here was a find; and everyone was so sure of his eligibility and competence that they promptly placed upon his head all the transgressions they could think of—enough, indeed, to clear the whole political cosmos of the iniquity of ages past and to come. The vicarious sacrifice was made—made in a hurry, too, for there was no time to lose—and the figure of political morality and virtue, which had seemed to be getting a little swaybacked under the burdens, straightened up again and held its head high and unflinching, ready for any challenge.

But happily—well, the story is an open book, so why rehearse its disappointing upshot here? The scapegoat business has been regretfully abandoned as showing altogether too low an average of efficiency, and instead of sending into the wilderness a burden-bearer of collective sin, it is suggested that the case for sin and sinners alike is pretty hopeless and that after all, probably, nothing much can be done but leave them as they are and say as little about them as possible. It is poor old, recreant, incorrigible human nature that is to blame, and this discovery of our high priests has been promulgated more in sorrow than in anger. One says, “it is useless to reform anything while human nature is what it is.” This counsel of despair seems to show that the diplomatic mind, in its virtue and in its disinterestedness, is overcome with disillusion and despondency. Another says, “we are all barbarians at heart,” and one perceives at once the futility of every substitutionary effort since the days of Aaron. An editor of one of our great dailies tells us, “The painful events of the last eighteen months have somewhat dashed our hopes of being able to reform humanity this year. All of us wish to end war, all of us know its horrors, but few of us have sufficient faith in human nature to believe that any given set of arrangements will make war impossible.” There it is; so human nature, not Wilhelm or Franz Josef or even Lenin—hard as it is to part with him—has been at the bottom of all this terrible business. Human nature reversed the foreign policies of Europe; it made all the secret treaties; it schemed to form the armament and financial rings which have thrived in Europe since the year 1892; it lured the European government into Africa. It was human nature that deliberately made a false profession of fighting to overthrow militarism, autocracy, dictatorship, and bureaucracy; its promises of democracy, freedom, and peace were wilful deception. It fostered revolution in Russia, and made a Foreign Minister of Trotzky. It rejected the armistice

terms agreed to by the belligerents, and drafted a military peace now admitted to be unworkable. It blasted the Fourteen Points to smithereens and sent rates of exchange on a downward course, the end of which no man can see. It raised the cost of living to the breaking-point, imposed egregiously unjustifiable taxation, and by consequence, spread discontent and unrest all through the masses who work for their living. On the spiritual side, it made jingoes of many leading pacifists, it turned liberals from the path of progress, it prolonged the war, insisted on the "knockout blow" and the blockade. It is human nature that is responsible for war, pestilence, and hunger; all the death and devastation in Europe is properly chargeable to human nature "being what it is."

One should refrain from forming hasty conclusions, but still, these suggestions seem to bear many earmarks of an alibi. Perhaps perversity, perhaps an inveterate partiality for human nature, perhaps something a little more substantial than either, counsels caution about accepting them. Surely neither statesman nor editor would suggest that any European people (human nature) had anything to say about the making of this war, or any of the wars that have arisen in its wake. In what way were the people of Europe (human nature) responsible for the outbreak of hostilities? The documents and the secret treaties indicate that all told, including statesmen, diplomatists, military and naval staff officers, not more than five hundred persons at the very outside figure, had anything to say about the business. Never since warfare began has human nature had so little to do with the policy of making war and prolonging war. Not one general election in a belligerent country took place in Europe during the war; human nature had no effective chance to express itself. But one notices that all the Premiers, Chancellors, and Foreign Ministers, of the Governments that entered the fray in 1914 were driven from office with commendable promptness at the earliest opportunity and that President Wilson owes his official existence to the lucky accident of a fixed term.

Thus the case for human nature, on examination, is not so bad as it might be. One gets a distinct impression that human nature will stand a better chance of working out its own salvation if statesmen, diplomatists, and editors will do it the one inestimable service of leaving it alone. The present pessimism of the press makes a curious contrast with the fulsome optimism which appeared constantly in its editorial columns a year or so

ago. Editors now despair of human nature because the peace treaty will not work; but bless you, the peace treaty was made in secret, and human nature never got within shouting distance of the little camarilla of half a dozen gentlemen who knaved it into shape. One reads that “the plan which might have done a good deal to make wars less frequent has been mishandled. We did not get and we could not have got a peace that would end war. We wanted it so badly that we once thought it possible; but we have learned something since then.” Well, without prejudice, one may remark that precious few who now say they wanted it so badly did anything very noteworthy for it at the only time when such efforts had a chance of counting.

This ingenious notion of making human nature its own scapegoat is apt to fail: for in the past, human nature, in the shape of living human beings, has only too willingly submitted to the ignominy of being the scapegoat for ministers, diplomatists, armament-makers and propagandists. There are indications that it has found the part to be tedious and unprofitable, and that it is ready to propose a change. Human nature is getting a little tired of economic imperialism abroad and economic exploitation at home. It has begun to see the fundamental place of those hoary iniquities in the political systems whose collision brought Europe to ruin. When the time comes, it is quite probable that human nature will give an extremely good account of itself in dealing with them, in spite of all the despondent forecasts of those who now distrust it.

F. N. 17. iii. 20.

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## IN THE VEIN OF INTIMACY

THE editors of this paper and its publisher appreciate more than they can say, the unlooked-for cordiality shown by the press to its first two issues. Influential daily newspapers throughout the country have held out the hand of kindly hospitality and have given the paper a most prepossessing editorial introduction to their readers. Very courteously, too, have some of the weekly papers come forward with their greeting; and among these is one whose traditions command the utmost respect of all Americans, and whose specific service during the past two years has been immeasurable.

Amid a riot of the lowest passions and the most contemptible prejudices, the *Nation* walked worthily. For this it deserves, and as time goes on will increasingly be seen to deserve, the lasting gratitude of all citizens whose loyalty is loyalty to their country rather than to its office-holders; and the *Nation* in its last issue does this paper the honour of generous praise and a cordial welcome into "the field of liberal journalism."

By gratitude, therefore, as well as unusual respect, this paper seems bound to deprecate with all possible delicacy, this recommendation to the *Nations* readers. The *Freeman* is not a liberal paper; it has no lot or part with liberalism; it has no place in the field of liberal journalism and can not pretend to seek one. That field, indeed, is so competently served by the *Nation* itself and by the *New Republic* that it would be a superfluity, not to say an impertinence, for the editors of this paper to think of invading it. The *Freeman* is a radical paper; its place is in the virgin field, or better, the long-neglected and fallow field, of American radicalism; its special constituency, if it ever has any, will be what it can find in that field. Hence, readers of the *Nation*, if ever they do this paper the honour of picking it up, must not be misled by Mr. Villard's quick and characteristic generosity in bestowing upon it a distinction to which it has no right.

Radicalism and liberalism, unfortunately, are often used as interchangeable terms; so used, indeed, by whole myriads who, if a free public school-system is half what it is cracked up to be, ought to know better. Really, one is sometimes reminded of the man who told his little boy that ensilage is a kind of mucilage. For present purposes there is no need of contrasting academic and philosophical definitions of the two terms; the dictionary will do that in half the time, and save trouble all round. Some practical distinctions, however—such, for instance, as differentiate a radical from a liberal paper—are perhaps worth mentioning.

In the philosophy of public affairs, the liberal gets at his working theory of the State by the "high *priori* road"; that is to say, by pure conjecture. Confronted with the phenomenon of the State, and required to say where it came from and why it is here, the liberal constructs his answer by the *a priori* method; thus Carey, for example, derived the State from the action of a gang of marauders, Rousseau from a social contract, Sir Robert Filmer from the will of God, and so on. All these solutions of the problem are ingenious and interesting speculations, but nothing more than speculations.

The radical gets at his theory of the State by the historical method; by tracing back and examining every appearance of the State, to the most remote examples that history can furnish; segregating the sole invariable factor which he finds to be common throughout, and testing it both positively and negatively as a determining cause.

The result carries the radical to the extreme point of difference from the liberal in his practical attitude towards the State. The liberal believes that the State is essentially social and is all for improving it by political methods so that it may function accordingly to what he believes to be its original intention. Hence, he is interested in politics, takes them seriously, goes at them hopefully, and believes in them as an instrument of social welfare and progress. He is politically-minded, with an incurable interest in reform, putting good men in office, independent administrations, and quite frequently in third-party movements. The liberal forces of the country, for instance, rallied quite conspicuously to Mr. Roosevelt in the good old days of the Progressive party. The liberal believes in the reality and power of political leadership; thus, again, he eagerly took Mr. Wilson on his hands at the last two elections. The radical, on the other hand, believes that the State is fundamentally anti-social and is all for improving it off the face of the earth; not by blowing up office-holders, as Mr. Palmer appears to suppose, but by the historical process of strengthening, consolidating and enlightening economic organization. It is the impetus that Lenin has given to economic organization, and not his army, that makes him a terror to the State. The radical has no substantial interest in politics, and regards all projects of political reform as visionary. He sees, or thinks he sees, quite clearly that the routine of partisan politics is only a more or less elaborate and expensive byplay indulged in for the sake of diverting notice from the primary object of all politics and political government, namely, the economic exploitation of one class by another; and hence all candidates look about alike to him, and their function looks to him only like that of Dupin’s pretended lunatic in “The Purloined Letter.”

On the side of economics, the practical difference between the radical and the liberal is quite as spacious. The liberal appears to recognize but two factors in the production of wealth, namely, labour and capital; and he occupies himself incessantly with all kinds of devices to adjust relations between them. The radical recognizes a third factor, namely, natural

resources; and is absolutely convinced that as long as monopoly-interest in natural resources continues to exist, no adjustment of the relations between labour and capital can possibly be made, and that therefore the excellent devotion of the liberal goes, in the long-run, for nothing. Labour, applied to natural resources, produces wealth; capital is wealth applied to production; so long, therefore, as access to natural resources is monopolized, so long will both labour and capital have to pay tribute to monopoly and so long, in consequence, will their relations be dislocated. The liberal looks with increasing favour upon the socialization of industry, or as it is sometimes called, the democratization of industry. The radical keeps pointing out that while this is all very well in its way, monopoly-values will as inevitably devour socialized industry as they now devour what the liberals call capitalistic industry. What good would possibly come to labour or capital or to the public, from democratizing the coal-mining business, for example, unless and until monopoly-interest in the coal-beds themselves were expropriated? The miners of England have begun to see this and to shape their demands accordingly. What use in democratizing the business of operating railways, as long as the franchise-value of railways remains unconfiscated? What use in democratizing the building industry, so long as economic rent continues to accrue to monopoly? No use whatever, as the radical sees it, except for a very moderate amount of educative value that may probably be held to proceed from the agitation of such projects.

Thus the fundamental differences between the radical and the liberal may be seen, even from this brief sketch, to be considerable; too considerable by far to permit this paper to go under false colours into the hands of any readers of the *Nation*. It has been very distasteful to make the *Nation's* courtesy a text for the drawing-out of these differences; but the dishonourable acceptance, even for a moment, of an honourable distinction, would be much more distasteful.

A. J. N. 31. iii. 20.

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## ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

PRESIDENT WILSON, early in the war, did one of the most just and useful things, probably the most just and useful thing, in his whole career,

when he made his famous differentiation between the German Government and the German people. He pointed out that the character, interests and aims of the German Government were wholly different from those of the German people and directly opposed to them; that the Government actively and incessantly worked against the interests of the people, and meanwhile deluded the people with false notions of patriotism in order to get them to accept and fall in with its nefarious purposes. In putting all this so clearly, the President did an inestimable service to the principles of radicalism. Radicalism had been saying just this about the German Government for years and years; it was saying just this when that same Government was in high favour at Washington, when President Roosevelt and the German Emperor were hobnobbing hand and glove.

President Wilson, however, based his admirable statement upon rather different and much less philosophical grounds than those proposed by radicalism. He based it upon the ground, that the German Government was autocratic and irresponsible—one of the most curious assertions, one would say, that Mr. Wilson, in view of his own record, would have the hardihood to make. Radicalism criticized and condemned the German Government; radicals the world over beheld it as inimical to the interests of the German people, not because it was autocratic and irresponsible, not, above all, because it was German, but because it was political. By means of its historical investigations into the origin and nature of the State, of political government in general, radicalism perceived that the State, wherever found and whether autocratic, constitutional or republican, invariably operated against the interests of the people; and that its administration was carried on by what, therefore, could be properly regarded (as Mr. Wilson appeared to regard and encouraged us all to regard the German Administration) as a professional-criminal class. Radicalism saw that the primary interest of political government, wherever found and under whatever mode or form, was in maintaining the economic exploitation of one stratum of society by another. Hence radicalism has long been out of the habit, except for purposes of pure geography, of nationalizing political government; quite as sensible persons, long before the war, had given up the habit of nationalizing atrocities committed by armies. Radicalism sees that the German, English and American Governments are German, English, American, only in the same limited and superficial sense that the atrocities

in Belgium, India and the Philippines were German, English, American. Louvain, Amritsar and the "water-cure" were *military* atrocities; Hell-roaring Jake Smith was not a product of America but of militarism, which is the same the world over. No special indictment of character can properly be held against the German, English or American peoples on account of these, for it is abundantly demonstrable that wherever an army is and under whatever incidental nationality, there of nature and necessity are atrocities. Thus, to the eye of radicalism, the German, English, American Governments are not essentially German, English, American; they are essentially political. They are not, therefore, properly to be criticized or defended or even considered, according to their geography, but according to their nature and character. No one objects to Asiatic cholera because it is Asiatic, but because it is deadly.

Never to greater profit could this view be tenaciously held and energetically propagated than at the present time. All signs point to an era of misunderstanding and ill feeling between the two peoples who of all on earth have least to quarrel about and most to communicate to a needy world —the English people and ourselves. This misunderstanding is being now most industriously promoted in both countries by those who have lost sight of Mr. Wilson's invaluably just distinction, and are busily identifying the English Government and its aims with the English people and their aims, and the American Government and its aims with the American people and their aims; and there is no telling what misery, distress and error may ensue upon this confusion within the next two years. One section of our press identifies the English Government with the English people as a text for indiscriminate praise, another as a text for indiscriminate blame; and the one is as wrong and contemptible and profoundly dangerous as the other. Talk of the Red Menace!—indeed, the elements that most menace the interests of the American people are, first, the Tory-Federalists and imperialists who day by day release irruptions of adulatory and neurasthenic sycophancy upon England, and, second, those who day by day open upon her the floodgates of their recrimination and invective. They are menacing because both of them alike assume a fixed correspondence in character and purpose between the English Government and the English people; and there is no such correspondence. Meanwhile, like influences in England make the same assumption about our Government and our people;

and if such are permitted to have the pre-eminence in both countries, we are likely to see a very pretty quarrel bred by this inveterate and unwarranted confusion.

Probably no one, certainly no radical, would, after the happenings of the last five years, have much of a good word to say for political government, wherever found; any more than President Wilson could find to say for that particular fraction of political government towards which he was endeavoring to arouse all the malignity of which misguided and uninformed human nature is capable. But this is not the point. The point is that in all their consideration of Anglo-American relations, the American people should be clearly aware, and should show themselves clearly aware, that the aims and interests of the English Government are not those of the English people but essentially opposed to them; and that the English people should in their turn, make a similar discrimination. This will be the bond of peace in which a true unity of the spirit can be kept and cultivated to limitless effectiveness. When Mr. Hearst, for example, talks about “England” or “Great Britain,” let us clearly understand that he is proceeding upon a monstrous and shocking assumption; and let the English people have the same fixed understanding with regard to Mr. Bottomley’s outpourings. When another section of our press spews a turbid spate of sycophancy over some ambassador’s sayings or doings, or over some oratory at a Pilgrim’s dinner or at a Washington’s Birthday celebration in London, let us remember that the interest appealed to is not that of the English people but of political government; and let the English people take a similar saving precaution in the premises.

If Americans wish to get a composite of the English people, to know what their fundamental tradition is and what their fundamental loyalties are, they need not turn to English history or literature, for they will find it more conveniently in their own. Let them resolutely close their eyes to diplomatic exchanges and official pronouncements, and read Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Thoreau, Wendell Phillips, Henry George. There is England; there is the fundamental, imperishable tradition of the English people, obstinately held to and continuously pushed forward against every bulwark that political government has raised against it. If the English wish to know the fundamental tradition of the American people, let them look for it in the centuries before the Conquest, in the Peasants’ War, in Peterloo, in William

Cobbett and in Richard Cobden. Ours is theirs, and theirs is ours; political government is opposed to it here, precisely as it is there. It is the magnificent tradition of economic freedom, the instinct to know that without economic freedom no other freedom is significant or lasting, and that if economic freedom be attained, no other freedom can be withheld.

Economic freedom is that to which political government in both countries, as in all countries, is primarily opposed. Political government in England is having an increasingly hard time with its task, in the face of a high and purposeful economic organization; in the United States it has so far, from purely natural causes, had but little trouble. So much the more, then, should the English people be patient with our imperfect understanding of our tradition; consider the disabilities which political government has put upon us with its inhibiting control of our schools and our press; and assist us in our effort to clear and educate and emancipate ourselves. For our part, it is what Burke calls "the ancient and inbred piety, integrity, good nature and good humour of the English people" that Americans should cleave to, and not the words or works of a Government that is no more essentially English than ours is essentially American. If the distinction that Mr. Wilson drew so precisely be but understood in England and in the United States, then it will be perceived at once that the more diligently political government be slighted and disallowed, and the higher the type of economic organization effected by common effort between the two countries, the sooner will the great common tradition of economic freedom prevail.

A. J. N. 14. iv. 20.

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## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

OUR correspondent "Gallerius," whose letter appears in this issue, perhaps uses the word radical in a Palmerian sense; in which case there is nothing to be said. No one can quite make out what the Palmerian radical is, hence no one can say what he is bent on or with what programme or philosophy he is equipped. But if our correspondent takes his definition from the dictionary, his letter seems based on a misapprehension. The radical is not interested in destructive criticism or destructive methods, let alone regarding them as "a

gay business," but in the promotion of disinterested thought. The ablest and most distinguished of American radicals said:

> Social reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting, by complaints and denunciations, by the formation of parties, or the making of revolutions, but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought, there can not be right action; and when there is correct thought, right action will follow. Power is in the hands of the masses of men. What oppresses the masses is their ignorance, their short-sighted selfishness.

"There rests upon the radical," proceeds our correspondent, "the obligation to develop in theory a new economics and a new political economy . . . which will bear the test of the severest criticism." But all this has been done. It was begun a century and a half ago by Turgot and his associates, and its development has been carried forward by a line of economists of, to say the least, quite respectable reputation. This new economics contemplates precisely the thing that seems to engage the interest of our correspondent; namely, a society entirely free from class-domination and class-exploitation, a society which assures absolute freedom of production and freedom of exchange. Its "technique of organization" has been set forth in France by Quesnay, in England by Adam Smith and Richard Cobden, in this country by Henry George, in Austria by Ludwig Gumplowicz and Theodor Hertzka, and in Germany by writers innumerable. Whatever else our correspondent may complain of, he should at least not complain of any failure in "a detailed plan of reconstruction which meets every test of reason." He might perhaps best see what sort of thing the radical has to offer in this line, by beginning with the last chapter, which is all he need ever read, of Marx's "Kapital"; then reading carefully the "Grossgrundeigentum und Soziale Frage" of Franz Oppenheimer, the same author's "Theorie der Reinen und Politischen Œkonomie," and then the "Protection or Free Trade" of Henry George. This lay-out of provender will give him most plentifully what he says he wants, "something solid for both the friends and the enemies of the new regime to set their teeth in." It is something indeed so solid that those who hitherto have undertaken to bite it have simply broken their teeth. Henry George, in a preface to the fourth edition of "Progress and Poverty," a book which sets forth the same "detailed plan of reconstruction which meets every test of reason," says

what could be said of very few books, “I have yet to see an objection not answered in advance in the book itself.”

Perhaps our correspondent, at the end of this exercise, will see that radicals have been quite forward to “accept the obligations of careful, methodical and constructive thought.” They have assumed no monopoly of those obligations or of the ability to discharge them; they desire the production and exchange of thought to be quite as free as the production and exchange of goods. But they have done well enough, possibly, not quite to deserve the implication that they habitually shirk those obligations. It seems unfortunate, perhaps a little unfair, that our correspondent should disparage the “apostles of the new order,” without knowing at least a little of the best that those apostles can do. He would, for example, find a great deal of careful, methodical and constructive thought applied to the most modern conditions and our very latest problems, in the solid treatise called “Democracy versus Socialism,” by the Australian economist, Max Hirsch; and if he can summon energy to chew his way through seven chapters of the most highly concentrated and most highly nutritious pemmican ever put before mankind, he will find it in Franz Oppenheimer’s little volume, hardly more than a pamphlet, called “The State.” It is solid food-value, if one can worry it down, but it is very, very rough.

May not our correspondent’s suspicion of radicalism—we put this forward quite tentatively—be due to two things? May it not be due in part to the distrust of simplicity which is consequent upon sophistication by the apparent complexity of human society? The law of the economic fundamental, as he will discover from a persual of the literature here cited, is extremely simple, simple as Newton’s formula. The process of establishing the economic fundamental is also extremely simple. Therefore one may easily doubt whether anything so simple can possibly reach as far and accomplish as much as “the apostles of the new order” think it may. It looks too much like a nostrum or a panacea to recommend itself to the sophisticated and more or less bewildered sense of the observer of affairs. One can be a little encouraged, however, by remembering that all the fundamentals of nature are quite simple; Newton’s formula is a happy parallel. This encouragement may induce our correspondent to fall back on his own prescription of careful and methodical thought. If he will go through some such course of reading as we have suggested, grasp the

economic fundamental, and then stringently think through to the end of its implications in any set of economic circumstances he chooses to postulate, he will then know for himself, which is the most satisfactory kind of knowledge, how far those implications may be expected to extend.

May not our correspondent be influenced also by the radical's attitude towards the "myriad of practical problems" intimated in the last paragraph of his letter? Perhaps this attitude may not seem to him devout enough towards "the functions of the technician in industry," towards industrial democratization, the Plumb plan, the shop-stewards' movement, or what not. The radical, however, does not disparage these matters; he is merely aware that until the economic fundamental is established, none of them can be adjusted with any permanence, and that once the economic fundamental be established, most of them will adjust themselves. Here is another opportunity for careful and methodical thought. Let our correspondent follow through the implications of the economic fundamental upon every one of his "myriad of practical problems" and see how many of those problems will disappear bodily, and how many will be simplified almost to the point of automatic adjustment. The radical's governing maxim is, "First things first"; or, as it might be put, "In digging a well, begin at the top and not at the bottom—it is easier work and less than half as much of it." The radical, however, has a very keen interest in all organized dealings with the "myriad of practical problems," because he is aware that all such dealings are educative. Trade-unionism, for example, as an end in itself, does not interest the radical; but as a way to the establishment of the cooperative principle, he has great interest in it. Nationalization of coal-mines, again, is nothing to stir the radical very deeply; as bringing men into a much clearer view of the economic fundamental, however, it has value which he recognizes and fully appreciates.

We hope our correspondent will not complain because, instead of arguing his letter, we have tried merely to put him in the way of satisfying his own doubts; instead of taking up cudgels for the radical cause, we have tried only to indicate how he might most fairly and competently assess that cause for himself. We would not do him the injustice of assuming that he wishes us to engage in dialectics or to do his thinking for him. Doing any one's thinking is no part of this paper's business; to attempt it is an immense and silly pretension. We are glad of the privilege, however, of

encouraging independent thought along what seems to us a profitable and infrequently chosen line, and of pointing out such waymarks as are known to us.

A. J. N. 16. vi. 20.

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## ILLUSIONS OF THE LANDLESS

THE news from Italy of the metal-workers' strike is particularly interesting because it exhibits practically all the elements of the Russian industrial revolution. In Milan and Turin the workers have occupied the factories, and in many respects they seem to be masters of the situation, but they are masters only in name and for the time, for already they are finding how difficult it is to take over the factories and run them in the interests of labour unless they have the good will and support of the supervisors and the technicians. It has not taken them long to find out that under this economic system administration is a factor to be reckoned with in any industrial revolution. A dispatch from Rome says that "the men have no adequate direction and expert advice in carrying on the work of the different factories, and are declared to have made advances to technical employees, asking them to make common cause with the workers." It seems that the Engineers' Association has emphatically declined this suggestion; which is quite to be expected because the technical expert is as a rule, by his social and industrial affiliations, remote from socialist theory of any kind. It is true that technicians of socialist persuasion are not infrequently found in professional associations, but their influence on the body of their associates seldom in a political sense, extends very far.

The primary question seems to be whether it is practically possible for the Italian workers to take over the factories and run them successfully without the co-operation of technical and administrative experts. In Russia, Lenin found out very soon that it could not be done. Indeed, one of the most significant incidents of the industrial revolution in Russia was the quickness with which Lenin saw the grave danger of utter industrial chaos, and the alacrity of his move away from the principles of Marxian socialism to what is called by loose thinkers the individualistic system, and his coming to terms with the experts of industry. Whether Lenin's course will be followed

by the workers in Italy, remains to be seen, but from the advices that have reached us it looks as though the employers and the experts are at agreement to permit the industrial revolution there to come to a chaotic end.

There is, moreover, to be considered how the workers are to be supplied with the necessary raw materials. All the dispatches received here from Milan, Turin and Rome indicate quite clearly the enormous difficulties the workers have to contend with in finding supplies of raw material. In this matter the Italian industrial revolutionists are at an unusual disadvantage. They, unlike the Russians, have a system of landlordism which is all in favour of the employers, the technicians and the administrators. In Russia, raw materials of all kinds were to be had, but not so in Italy; coal, coke, crude oil, and other such primary necessities have to be imported, or can be obtained at home only in trifling amounts. Semi-raw materials of all kinds are imported in huge quantities.

Here is another case of industrial revolution apparently doomed to defeat, because it is begun at the wrong end of the economic scale. The Italian industrial revolution will almost surely end disastrously; and those who will be hit hardest will be the workers themselves, for they have done just what the French did on several occasions, and what the Russians also did. They have made their start by taking over the factories, without first dealing with the landlord, who is the supreme ruler of the natural resources from which labour has to draw all raw materials, and the landlord will reveal a power, over their revolution, far more effective than the power that any government can exert or that the co-operating employers and the technicians can exert. Then, further, the Italian situation shows clearly that it is impossible for the workers to carry out any industrial revolution under the present economic system, until economic internationalization has taken place. The employers and technicians can put a stop to the importation of the supplies of raw material, and at the same time they can neutralize domestic and foreign markets so far as the purchase of manufactured articles is concerned. They themselves can afford to wait while the revolutionists are piling up a mountain of difficulties. They may have to go on what is for them short commons, for a time, but men in that position usually have something put by for a rainy day. It is tolerably certain that the workers will be reduced to extremities long before their opponents feel the pinch of poverty. And in all this conflict the employers, the technicians, the

supervisors, and the administrators of industry have the landlord at their backs in the absolutely impregnable position that he has always occupied under our economic system. The holder of natural resources can laugh at any and every industrial revolution which is begun by the “socialization of industry.”

The capitalistic system arose from the expropriation of the mass of the people from the soil. That is the fundamental fact pointed out by Marx in “Das Kapital,” but as he does it in the last chapter, most of his disciples have never discovered it and are unaware that he has pointed it out at all. That was the way by which the worker was deprived of his economic alternative, and the worker without an alternative is in a hopeless position. Strikes and industrial revolutions take place with increasing frequency, bringing only an illusion to the landless, to the expropriated masses who have been thrust into the labour market, there to compete with one another and depress wages. These strikes and revolutions have value of the kind that we have often remarked, and are not to be deprecated; but otherwise they are futile. The only sound beginning is by first undoing the wrong that Marx referred to, by dealing scientifically with the land-question. The labour-question is the land-question. Socialists, whether led by Lenin or Malatesta or Sidney Webb or Eugene Debs, might profitably turn from the Italian news-dispatches to muse upon Marx’s great chapter on the modern theory of colonization. Not until this economic lesson is thoroughly learned can any effective reform of industry take place. It must be clearly understood that private ownership of economic rent is the root of all the present industrial discontent. No one has put this quite so clearly as Tolstoy:

> It is sufficient to understand all the criminality, the sinfulness, of the situation in this respect, in order to understand that until this atrocity, continually being committed by the owners of the land, shall cease, no political reforms will give freedom and welfare to the people, but that, on the contrary, only the emancipation of the majority of the people from that land-slavery in which they are now held can render political reforms, not a plaything and a tool for personal aims in the hands of politicians, but the real expression of the will of the people.

Neither political nor industrial reforms will give freedom to the people. What did political reform do for France? What has it done for England? What did the most highly specialized developments of paternalism do for Germany? There is only one thing to be done first, and this is to re-impropriate the mass of the people upon the soil by the confiscation of

economic rent. Mere haphazard and superficial revolutionary activity, whatever its collateral value—and it is bound to be relatively slight—is sterile. Henry George said:

> Social reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting, by complaints and denunciation, by the formation of parties or the making of revolutions, but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought there can not be right action, and when there is correct thought right action will follow.

Perhaps the Italian industrial revolution will provide a salutary illustration of this great truth, no matter what apparent benefit may accrue to the workers in the terms they make with the employers. Only apparent they will be, no matter how impressively the revolution may end, for whatever the power wielded by Italian labour, it will be found that a greater power is silently, constantly, at work frustrating labour's efforts and hopes; and this power is the landlord's .

F. N. 22. ix. 20.

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## THE BASES OF THE FIVE ESSENTIALS

WHEN we look back to that remote period immediately following the announcement of the armistice-terms, when all the world was talking about a lasting peace and reconstruction and the dawn of a new era, we recall the unanimity with which most people at that time believed that at least five specific reforms were essential to the upbuilding of the new world: 1. A peace based on reason and justice. 2. The abolition of economic, commercial and financial imperialism. 3. The removal of tariff-barriers. 4. The abolition of armaments. 5. The abolition of secret diplomacy.

These were regarded as lofty aims, it is true; but after all those years of sorrow, who could dare ask for less? The common people of all countries were not alone in believing that the new era would at once be ushered in with the achievement of these reforms; but men in high places, leaders of opinion, declared these aims to be a practical residuum of good precipitated from all the evil that the world had so long endured. Even those who were sceptical of the large promise of a new world were ready to accept the smaller promise of a new Europe. So much, at least, was considered to be

within the sphere of practical politics, even of the kind in vogue in Paris during the spring of 1919. Indeed, so confident were the reconstructionists that they were content to leave to their so-called representatives in Paris the whole business of building the new era and even the lesser task of making a new Europe. The treaty of peace was an unconscionable time coming, just as it now is an unconscionable time dying, but when at last its terms were made public the world was not slow to realize that the five essentials were not there, nor any faint hint or promise of them.

One would hesitate to go back over all this old ground and restate these too well-known facts, were it not that signs are abroad of a revival of that same blind and simple-minded optimism which was displayed by the reconstructionists and reformers in the days of the armistice. Now as then, the exercise of ordinary observation and common-sense, the willingness to see and to acknowledge that two and two make four, is disparaged as mere calamity-mongering. This state of affairs is as preposterous as it is vicious. Everyone will agree that there was never such need as there is to-day for cheerfulness and hope; that now is the time beyond all others for the exercise of the utmost patience, equanimity and tenacity of purpose; but these qualities must spring from something more substantial than mere illusion, and must be nourished on something more satisfying than the west wind. It is to enforce this truth that one may quite properly even at this late day recall the temper of the armistice-period, and remind oneself of what came of that temper in the end.

To begin with, there is little merit in a peace which lacks all five of the essentials upon which alone a new Europe can be built. After the recent meeting at Geneva any surviving faith in the League of Nations has to whistle hard to keep its courage up. What, then, have those who are making such a specialty of cheerfulness to suggest for the rescue of Europe from the devastation that has been wrought upon it by the old system? If anybody still wants the five essentials why be so much annoyed when told that they are not being had? If, however, these things are no longer regarded as the essentials of reconstruction, this paper would be unfeignedly glad to know what better proposals can be suggested. For ourselves, we still believe the five essentials to be pretty good for a beginning; and so far are we from being annoyed with those who tell us that we are not getting them, that we

are even eager to listen to anyone who can tell us how to discover a way that looks towards their attainment.

The first constructive suggestion that seems to make directly towards this end, is that all of us should acquire a very much better knowledge of the economic system which alone makes war possible. Other than this knowledge, there is no durable foundation for the five essentials, and this foundation is not yet laid. We need to know how diplomacy, secret and aggressive in its economic and commercial commitments, fosters the growth of armaments, and through a servile press spreads envy, hatred and malice on every hand. Suppose, again, that we turn our attention to the question of tariff-barriers and try to understand their bearing upon the other four of our five essentials. We should soon come to learn that the frontier-question is a tariff-question. Here in this country, the greatest free-trade area in the world, there are no tariff-barriers between any two of the States, and thus we have no frontiers in the European sense. Frontiers in that sense call for armies as coast-lines call for navies; these frontiers, indeed, demand all the unproductive services of military and naval systems.

Another important fact calling for close observation is the desire of nations with tariffs and frontiers to exploit the natural resources of other nations possessing tariffs and frontiers: for example, France and Germany, in the matter of ore and coal. The little pamphlet “Where Iron is, there is the Fatherland” reveals the interplay of the great international exploiting interests that foment wars—the secret interests that have for twenty or thirty years fought in bitter rivalry for control of the diplomacy of Europe.

Again, let any man or woman take an uncoloured map of the United States, and over it pin a map of Europe; then with a hard-pointed pencil go over all the frontier-lines of European countries, and observe the tracings left upon the map of the United States. Notice the size of the divisions, the multiplicity of frontiers, and think of the tariffs, the armies, the navies, the chancelleries, the international concessionaires; and then imagine what would be going on here if our country were split up in such a way, and what the frame of mind of our citizenry would be under such disabilities.

These are only a few preliminary considerations for those Americans who are really in earnest in their desire for a positive constructive programme, to put their minds on. There are deeper things, such as the economic question of land-reform, upon which all other modes of privilege

depend, but these that we have named are sufficient to give a sense of the direction in which our minds must work if we are ever to establish the five essentials of a new world.

F. N. 23. ii. 21.

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## THE CLASSICIST'S OPPORTUNITY

THE approach of spring attracts attention to the annual spawning of the colleges and universities; and this suggests in turn that the present would be an uncommonly good time for the friends of "the grand old fortifying classical curriculum," the advocates of Greek and Latin studies, to put on their war-paint and return to battle. They have suffered many defeats in recent years; the vocationalists and professors of natural science have had their own way with them for a generation, without let or hindrance. The reason is, in our opinion, that they have been content to remain on the defensive and have let the enemy choose the battle-ground. This is bad strategy. When the vocationalists have challenged the bread-and-butter value of training in the classics, the classicists (we use these terms in a general way, merely to save words) have always gone over to their ground and undertaken to show how much better electrician, chemist, horse-doctor, or what not, a man would become by having studied Greek and Latin literature. In point of fact, they are no doubt right; but it is bad tactics, unimaginative tactics, to rely for ever on sheer defence. The programme of events has now so played into their hand, the stars in their courses have so strikingly arrayed themselves on their side, that we think they ought to hearten up tremendously, and carry the war over into the enemy's country, horse, foot and dragoons.

If we were planning the campaign, we would start it off with a violent frontal assault on the enemy's whole theory of life. If the vocationalist's theory, Murdstone's theory, be the true one; if the world be merely a place to work in, not a place, as Murdstone said, "to be moping and droning in," then it is to the point to discuss the value of the classics in relation to the individual's place in such a world. But now let our friends stand up to the vocationalist and make him defend his theory, make him show cause for holding that the world is such a place. Let them boldly say that the world is

nothing of the kind, that it is a place to have fun in, and that you can have ten times more fun and better fun throughout your life if you know Greek and Latin literature, and the more intimately you know it and the closer you stick to it, the more fun you will have. Our friends will remind us that a good deal has been said and written in this vein. Yes, but always on the tacit assumption that the pleasure one has out of life is a sort of by-product, a secondary affair and something to be enjoyed "on the side," as one might say, instead of being life's primary object. Hence there is a general flavour of diffidence and deprecation about all this literature that impairs its apologetic value. Let the classicists come out flatfooted that life was given us to be enjoyed; let them not be afraid of exaggeration or overemphasis; let them resolutely close their ears to any other proposition; and then let them remorselessly take advantage of the support which human nature instinctively gives to that theory of life, and split the ranks of the vocationalists wide open.

There is no time like the present for doing this. The vocationalists have had a clear field; they have ridden organized education like the Old Man of the Sea for twenty-five years, thus bringing out one full generation of adult men and women, in whose hands the affairs of the world now are. They have made an immense success, and no one ought to begrudge them a jot of credit for it. The mechanical organization of society is a marvellous thing, and the development of mechanical facilities for its service is even more marvellous and startling. The only trouble is that nobody seems to be having a very good time. The poor and the exploited are not having a good time, which is to be expected; but the rich and privileged are not having a good time either. All the physical apparatus of happiness is about us, and yet no one, apparently, is having a cent's worth of fun out of it. Well, here is the classicist's opportunity. He can throw his experienced eye, trained by his incessant commerce with the ages, over this anomaly and show cause for it. He can survey the life of our well-to-do and poor alike, and show that about the only fun to be had out of such a life is the search for fun, and show why the desire remains ungratified. He can show by practical example —by horrible example—where, in the preparation for life, certain essential values which have been disregarded by the vocationalist, come in. Thus he has now an advantage which he never had before, in the opportunity to appraise a whole society which represents quite fairly the finished work of

his opponents. But we are convinced that he will once more merely fumble this advantage unless he stands immovable upon the bed-rock thesis that life is given to human beings for their enjoyment, that all its other purposes, if it have any, are incidental and ancillary to this one; that the human world by its original intention is not Murdstone's world, not a world of industry and efficiency, but a world of joy.

A. J. N. 2. iii. 21.

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## THE SKIRMISH AT TULSA

SINCE the great day of shooting and burning at Tulsa, Oklahoma, the press has dropped a tear upon the ashes, murmured a few ritualistic words about law-'n-order, and turned its back once more upon the race-problem. Naturally we ourselves have seen only a very small portion of the comment called forth by this affair, and yet we will gamble that most of it would have been equally applicable if a mob of whites had entered the jail at Tulsa, dragged out the Negro who was accused of assault on a white girl, and lynched him peaceably, in the good old-fashioned way. In other words, we do not believe that either the press or the public has come to grips with the fact that in this country race-prejudice is now manifested less and less frequently in unresisted racial persecution, and more and more often in the skirmishes of racial war. It appears to us that the significance of the annual decline in the number of lynchings can not be altogether understood by anyone who fails to give some attention to the recent increase in the number and violence of race-riots.

For a very long time, the professional friends of the Negro have habitually deprecated the idea that the black man might eventually attempt to meet force with force. The Negrophil might or might not believe sincerely in the all-suffering patience of the coloured people, but opportunism seemed to demand that he express such a belief, in order to allay the fears and flatter the pride of the South; nor is it to be forgotten that an appeal for the charitable treatment of a helpless and pacific race is somewhat flattering to the white man who makes it, as well as to the whites to whom the appeal is addressed.

It is true even to-day that any white man who invites the attention of his fellows to the possibility of a black uprising is likely to be looked upon as a fomenter of race-war, eager to turn loose hell-fire upon the Negroes. We are quite well aware of the fact that any mention of the possibility of resistance or retaliation on the part of the Negroes is frowned upon by some of our good friends, on the ground that the mere suggestion that such a thing is possible is likely to stir the whites to further violence; and yet we can not see how any final good can come of a refusal to acknowledge that America is now in the actual presence of developments long predicted by white alarmists.

It is not exactly clear how the trouble began at Tulsa, but what difference does it make? Whether or not the whites were planning to lynch the prisoner accused of assault, the Negroes had every historical reason for believing that an attempt of this sort would be made. Whether or not the Negroes were armed and organized and eager for a fight, they certainly put up a stiff defence when the clash came. The salient facts are plain enough; the only thing necessary to turn the habitual white persecution of the Negro into a free-for-all fight is a disposition on the part of the blacks to meet force with force, and unquestionably this disposition is on the increase, as the citizens of Washington, Chicago, Tulsa and a half-dozen other American cities now have reason to know.

We should like very much to join the quietists in the prediction that everything will come out all right, and yet we find ourselves tied up to the belief that men reap pretty much as they sow. The people of this country have planted hatred and violence among the Negroes, and now at last the crop is beginning to come in. If we do not like the harvest, it is high time we began another seeding.

If the Negro’s appeal to force is, under present conditions, inevitable, it seems to us to be futile also. If the violence of the white majority has not kept the Negroes in their place, violence on the part of the Negroes themselves can hardly help very much to lift them out of it. It is perfectly natural that the Negroes should fight back, and it is quite certain that the sheer weight of numbers will crush them in any conflict of force.

On the other hand, this assurance of final triumph can hold no great comfort for the whites. The Negroes can be ridden down, but not without cost. In nearly one-fourth of the counties of the South, the population is half

or more than half black; in some regions, the Negroes outnumber the whites six to one, even ten to one; and John Brown's soul as it goes marching among them is more and more "the soul of vengeance and wrath." If the appeal to force offered any promise of a final settlement, opportunism might find some excuse for it; but now that the Negroes are beginning to resist, violence can beget nothing but more violence, world without end.

This business of crying in the wilderness is quite uncongenial to us, and we should by no means indulge in it if we did not feel morally certain that the era of increasing violence is already upon the country. We are not prepared to recommend any specific cure for this symptom of race-prejudice; indeed we are inclined to believe that there is no such cure. We are not altogether sure that there is a cure for the disease itself. However it seems likely that a careful diagnosis of the case will show that the Negro is now generally recognized as an increasingly dangerous economic competitor of the white man and of the white worker in particular. Those of our friends who agree with us that such is actually the case may properly ask themselves two questions: To what extent can any direct attack upon the race-problem alter the conditions which govern economic competition? Can any approach to a final solution of the race-problem be made, by any means whatever, as long as these conditions remain what they are?

G. T. R. 15. vi. 21.

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## THE VANISHED UNIVERSITY

SOME one, writing about our universities, remarked after the fashion of Bishop Pontoppidan's famous chapter on owls, that there is not a university, properly so called, in the United States; that our universities are patterned after the modern English college, and have little in common, either in organization or in function, with the typical university. This is probably true; and as long as it remains true, the prospects for higher education are discouraging. An excellent French critic, M. Renan, said years ago that "countries which, like the United States, have created a considerable popular tuition without any serious higher education, will long expiate their error by their intellectual mediocrity, the vulgarity of their manners, their superficial spirit, their failure in general intelligence." As matters have

turned out, this too seems probable. Our creation of “a considerable popular tuition” has turned out a great grist of people who can read and write, after a fashion, and therefore in our graduated, popular scale of speech, are called educated. The full fruit of education, however—logic, lucidity, the power of independent thought, largeness of temper, sensitive good taste, strong intellectual curiosity combined with a quick and active faculty of selection—this is less often to be met with in our civilization than one would wish. One reason for this is undoubtedly that on which M. Renan put his finger; our system of higher education is not serious, it is not organized to produce this fruit. An interesting proof that it is not so organized may be found in the general instinctive recognition of the qualitative difference between native and foreign education. An American who speaks two or three languages, who knows one or two literatures beside his own, who has made some progress in the liberal arts and exhibits a correspondingly cultivated taste—such a one is taken, nine times out of ten, for a foreigner or as having been “educated abroad,” even though he may never in his life have been outside the United States.

Unusual interest attaches therefore to the centenary of an educational institution which was organized differently. The University of Virginia was by its original intention very largely a true university; and on this account the celebration of its centennial must, to the friends of “serious higher education” in M. Renan’s sense, bear somewhat of an *in memoriam* character. The buildings in the quadrangle, opening on the West Lawn, are still there, much as Mr. Jefferson left them, and their charm is still eloquent, still moving—all the more so, probably, because the tradition that Mr. Jefferson established, the tradition that for so many years they appropriately expressed, is now departed—

Up to Olympus from the widespread earth.

It was perhaps inevitable that this should be; the occasion, at all events, is one for neither praise nor blame, but rather for gratefully reminding ourselves of how great a thing it is to have had the University of Virginia bearing witness to that tradition for more than eighty years. To this extent anyone can, and every one should, unite heartily with the sentiment that is this year being expressed towards the University all over the land.

Some day, we may hope, that tradition will return; not only upon the University of Virginia, but upon, all the schools of the country. Some day, possibly, we shall see State-owned education disappear as we have seen a State-owned Church disappear. The relations between the State and education are as immoral and monstrous as those between the State and religion; and some day they will be so seen—though how many times, alas! before that day dawns, will the hawthorn and azaleas of Albemarle County bloom and decay! In the Middle Ages, some man of learning and ability, with a gift for teaching, like Peter Abélard or William of Champeaux or John of Scotland, emerged into repute; and people went to him from here and there, camped down on him and made him talk about such subjects as they wanted to hear discussed—and this was the university. The only organization it had was the loose, spontaneous and informal organization of students to protect themselves against the exactions of the natives—for the most part, curiously, the exactions of landlords, just such as we find practised to-day if we compare the scale of ground-rents in a "college town" with that in other towns. The university was, as we say, "run" by the students. If they got what they wanted, they remained; if not, they moved on. Meanwhile, they lived as they pleased and as they could, quite on their own responsibility. Then came Frederick Barbarossa, who threw the protection of the State over the university—and what moved him to do it was, again, the rapacity of certain Bolognese landlords—and he seems thereby to have done as much well-meant damage to education as Constantine did to religion when he threw the protection of the State over the Christian Church.

Mark Hopkins sitting on one end of a log and a student on the other—not a bad notion of a university, by any means; and the nearer we revert to that notion, the nearer we will come to establishing in this country some "serious higher education" that the *manes* of M. Ernest Renan would find respectable. A university run by the students, with only the loosest and most informal organization, with little property, no examinations, no arbitrary gradations, no money-grubbing president, no ignorant and meddling trustees! A university that would not hold out the slightest inducement to any but those who really wanted to be put in the way of learning something, and who knew what they wanted to learn; a university that imposed no condition but absolute freedom—freedom of thought, of expression and of

discussion! As one surveys actual university life in the United States, such a notion seems fanciful, almost fantastic. All the more gratefully then should we remember that a good approximation to this ideal, the only one, in fact, that this country has ever seen, was in the University of Virginia. Mr. Jefferson knew what freedom was, and believed in it and loved it; and this anniversary should remind us that the University of Virginia, founded by him, maintained with reasonable faithfulness the tradition of freedom for more than eighty years; maintained it, indeed, until overpowered by the sheer brute mass of a generation which does not know what freedom is and does not believe in it and cares nothing at all about it.

A. J. N. 29. vi. 21.

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## FIRST THINGS FIRST

A FINANCIAL writer on one of our Gargantuan contemporaries has discovered that "the ignorance prevalent everywhere concerning the workings of business, finance and economics, constitutes a national danger that ought to be combated very earnestly" by political, educational and business leaders, in order to prevent the suffering masses from seeking a blind revenge. He has discovered that "there is dire need for intelligent, comprehensive, cooperative effort to spread through the land elementary education in economics, so that, instead of relatively few persons being able to understand why times like the present occur, the great majority of our 107 million people will blame fundamental economic causes rather than the capitalists."

If the daily press were free to undertake a serious discussion of these important matters, much of the prevailing ignorance might be dispelled; but even more could be accomplished if the public would insist upon the right of open controversy. Politicians, teachers and men of affairs are by no means agreed upon fundamental laws; and if they were, their wisdom would be thrown away upon people who have lost the power to think for themselves. No doubt the press is peculiarly responsible for the present ignorance, for it has applied the principles of monopoly to the presentation of facts, prevented free competition in the exchange of thought, and impoverished the minds of a spiritless public.

The writer above quoted does not venture to express an opinion regarding the nature of fundamental economic laws, but modesty has not prevented us from making attempts at definition, and we have tried to draw an intelligible distinction between the monopolist and the capitalist, between forced competition and the freedom of action which the economists had in mind when they noted the beneficent results of competition in the world of human exertion. These distinctions are lost sight of by writers who are struck by the growth of combinations and trusts, and draw the conclusion that competition is, as one of them puts it, “for ever gone, consigned to the scrap-heap with the stagecoach, the hand loom and the horse-plough.”

It would be unwise to accept this prophecy without inquiring whether the elimination of competition has been due to natural or artificial causes; whether it has tended towards a balance of social forces or towards an arrangement that is likely to be upset. When we speak of combinations, we think first of steel, coal, copper, oil, lumber, water-power, all of which, in the language of political economy, are classed as “land.” Then comes transportation over the surface of the land, and finally the control of money and credit. The importance of land-monopoly in enterprises requiring large amounts of capital may be judged by the stress laid upon perpetual or long-term franchises; but the point is especially well made in the prospectus of an oil-venture that lies before us, from which we learn that “ownership of the land . . . is the key to all oil-profits.” It is not only the marketing of oil that attracts investment, but the fact that “by its very discovery it creates far vaster quick property-values than those flowing from the actual production of oil,” as the land for miles around the discovery is at once invested with “tremendous speculative possibilities.” The speculation in land-values is the central fact of our economic life, and it is made possible by laws which are common to all civilized countries, but none the less open to criticism. If they are finally declared unjust and mischievous, the validity of existing combinations will be seriously affected; and if the legal privilege of exclusive land-ownership is cancelled, the combinations based on the possession of natural resources can not continue in their present form.

As competition in the use of the earth has been reduced by combination, competition for the opportunity to work has become intensified. But the victims are no more enlightened than their masters. Instead of trying to

strike off their chains, they imitate the methods of monopoly and attempt in their turn to limit competition by trade-union regulations. So trust faces trust; neither side in the bitter struggle seeing that mutual service depends upon liberty of action, and that interference with liberty contracts the range of co-operative effort. No one will deny the advantages of combination in securing economies and increasing production, but that these advantages can be enjoyed without recourse to legal privileges is sufficiently indicated by the achievements of cooperative enterprise. Nor are they possible under the monopoly-system without serious attendant evils—gluts and famines, waste and high living-costs, to say nothing of the corrupt practices revealed by the Lockwood inquiry. Even the apologists of the trusts are shocked at the spectacle of food being deliberately destroyed because it can not be profitably marketed, or because of desire to keep up prices; and they offer regulation as the necessary counterpoise. So there is no end to the multiplication of laws. We first grant a private monopoly in the necessities of life, and having surrendered the responsibilities of free men, we call in the Government to protect us from the results of our own folly. But the bodies appointed to neutralize the effects of monopoly always fail, because, being human, they are liable to be influenced by the powerful forces they seek to control; and not being omniscient, they can not know what is fair as between the intricate conflicting interests.

When the economists declared that competition was the life of trade, and was competent to determine prices with substantial justice, they were thinking of a world in which the individuals were free to act in their proper interests. They may not have understood the full meaning of freedom, but they saw that no one in the absence of compulsion need accept an unfavourable bargain; and it has yet to be shown that competition among free men will not do all that was claimed for it, however baneful it may be when unnaturally forced. Labour-unrest, race-hatred and wars are but part of the price exacted by monopoly, by the attempt to circumvent nature’s impartiality. The repeal of restrictive laws would give full play to co-operation and would remove the fear of competition in a closed market. Employers’ associations and labour-unions would no longer serve anybody’s interest, racial animosity would lose its chief stimulus, and a basis would be laid for peaceful diplomacy.

Indeed it is idle to hope for genuine disarmament until this time arrives, and therefore one is pained to see the false hopes aroused by altruistic demonstrations that are so sure to lead to disappointment and discouragement as long as valid cause for conflict remains. Glad as we are to note the enthusiasm for international *rapprochement*, we can not shut our eyes to the fact that under cover of this emotional display, the privileged interests can the more easily stake out their claims, the bankers spread their nets, and the Governments which they control raise barriers to be battered down eventually by guns—all to the profit of the steel-trust, the powder-trust and their sister combinations. If the amount of energy now being expended on disarmament could be used to uncover and exhibit the legal privileges which create discord, we might hope for the beginning of a new era of prosperity and amity.

F. W. G. 20. vii. 21.

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## THE GREAT RECRUITING SERGEANT

THE Spanish Government appears to be meeting with considerable success in its efforts to recruit a foreign legion for service against the rebellious Moroccans. Indeed, from the viewpoint of this latest undertaking on the part of civilization, the rebellion could hardly have come more opportunely. Because of the great war there are millions of men with experience in up-to-date fighting, and because of the Versailles peace hundreds of thousands of these men are out of work; it follows, therefore, that the Spanish Government is having no difficulty at all in finding in the Allied countries unlimited numbers of trained recruits who are willing to fight the Moors in Northern Africa for ninety cents a day and “something to eat, something to wear and a place to sleep,” rather than face the alternative of starving at home. This seems a desperate choice, but a considerable number of our late heroes have been driven to make it. During the past few days the Spanish consulate in New York has been besieged by hungry, out-of-work Americans who have conveniently forgotten the ancient slogan of “Remember the Maine,” and all of those old stories of Spanish atrocities in Cuba which were once upon a time as fresh in the popular mind as stories of German atrocities are today. In London, too, one reads that the would-be

recruits have flocked to the Spanish consulate in such numbers that the police have been obliged to disperse them, and this general eagerness on the part of unemployed ex-soldiers to substitute a fighting chance for life in Morocco for the prospect of starving at home has even caused some inquiries to be made in the House of Commons.

The situation offers an excellent opportunity to moralize. It might be cited to the Governments of the victorious Allies as pointing their failure to make good their grandiose war-time promises. Some caustic things, for instance, might be said about this rush to fight the Moors in relation to Mr. Lloyd George's famous pronouncement about making England "a land fit for heroes to live in." However, such comment seems rather inept. Governments, as the agents of privilege, are interested in the ordinary citizen only in the degree that privilege finds him useful as a labour-motor or as an instrument of war. If privilege has no need for him in either of these ways his Government's interest in him will naturally lapse until the time when he again becomes useful, economically or militarily; or it will continue only in such degree as is absolutely necessary to keep his misery from causing him to become a source of danger to itself. With Governments what they are it is futile to expect them to keep those promises which they find it expedient to make in times of crisis, and ridiculous to expect them to show embarrassment over breaking them when the crisis is past. This paper, never having taken such promises seriously, is unable to work itself up into a state of excitement over any fresh evidence of failure to carry them out.

It is rather in its relation to the viewpoint of the sentimental pacifist that the situation appears to us to be noteworthy. The sentimental pacifist bases his arguments against war upon its horror, its waste of life, its wrongfulness from an ethical viewpoint. All these arguments are incontrovertible: these recruits that have been storming the Spanish consulate in New York and the Spanish legation in London have presumably had first-hand opportunities to prove their soundness. Yet with no illusions about the nature of war, they are undertaking to fight under hard conditions in a foreign land under a foreign flag in a cause which can have no more interest for them than Hecuba had for the Player. Obviously there is in this situation a determining factor undreamed of in the philosophy of sentimental pacifism; and it was admirably set forth by one of the would-be legionaries after this fashion:

I’m not kidding myself about this Spanish outfit. I know the grub will probably be rotten, and I saw enough bullets go by with the old First to satisfy me for the rest of my life, but I’ve got to live. If I can’t do it here in my own country I’ll do it in another country. Some of these birds are going over because they think they’re going to have a good time and see some action. I’m joining up because I don’t want to starve to death.

For ourselves, we have not the temerity to criticize this man’s choice. Strictly speaking, we suppose, it is no more unethical to kill Moors for one’s daily bread than to kill Germans for the economic advantage of a few privileged interests; and while we should be extremely reluctant to kill at all, still, we reflect that we have never been reduced to spending our nights on a park-bench and depending for our sustenance upon the nearest public drinking-fountain; we are not prepared, therefore, to be overpositive about the probable effect of such a predicament upon our respect for the sixth commandment.

What our pacifist friends fail to take into account is that there may be conditions under which to the average man peace becomes quite as intolerable as war. Those conditions are unemployment and involuntary poverty; and while they continue to exist it will always be easy enough to recruit an army for any purpose under the sun. The Black-and-Tans who have terrorized Ireland for the past two years are an excellent case in point. These men are British ex-soldiers who were glad enough to undertake the brutal work of the British Government in Ireland as an alternative to starving in the streets of British cities. Yet who can honestly doubt that they would have preferred peaceable, profitable employment at home, if such employment had been obtainable? There are comparatively few men who are willing to risk their lives in murderous work of this kind because they enjoy it.

Unemployment and involuntary poverty arise from the causes that produce war, and like war, they will disappear only when those causes are removed. It is land-monopoly that drives people from the land into the industrial labour-market, where the consequent overcrowding produces unemployment or employment at starvation-wages. It is land-monopoly at home that drives capital to look for investment in foreign markets where it can find the larger returns due to cheap land and cheap labour; and when conflicts arise between rival groups of concessionaires the result is war between their respective Governments. Protective tariffs are likewise a

fruitful source of unemployment, because of their interference with the free exchange of goods; and they are, moreover, a fruitful source of trouble between nations because of the resentment which they must needs engender.

Therefore we say again that while privilege is thus allowed to make peace hideous and war inevitable, it is futile to talk about disarmament. It is likewise futile and silly to lament the hard conditions which are driving our demobilized soldiers into the ranks of the Spanish foreign legion. These men may walk our city streets, jobless and hungry, without overmuch interest or sympathy being manifested for their plight; there is no real occasion, therefore, for any large display of these feelings when they choose the only way out of their miserable condition that happens to offer itself. Spain needs these men for cannon-fodder; their own country does not need them just now for anything; therefore they go to Spain. That is about all there is to it. When the people of this country and Great Britain begin to show some real interest in making "a land fit for heroes to live in," no doubt these heroes will be glad enough to stay at home and enjoy it: and the only kind of land that is fit for heroes to live in is a land that the heroes own.

S. L. F. 7. ix. 21.

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## BY WHOM THE OFFENCE COMETH

THE mills of government grind with exceeding slowness when it comes to turning out reform-measures. Indeed, it requires an enormous popular pressure to make them move at all; and when a measure designed to correct some crying evil in our social system is finally ground out into law, even then its enforcement is by no means assured. Political government offers privilege every facility for circumventing the popular will whenever it becomes inimical to the interests of privilege, as it is the business of political government to do; and the way of the reformer is by consequence hard and wearisomely repetitious. Thus, Federal laws aimed at the abolition of child-labour have twice been declared unconstitutional by the Federal courts; meanwhile the economic slavery of children continues, just as the economic slavery of the expropriated masses, be they children or adults,

will inevitably continue until its causes are finally known for what they are and are done away with.

There are many well-meaning people who, while they accept the social order which fosters economic slavery, have yet a horror of its manifestation in the enforced labour of children. This is perhaps due to the fact that in child-labour the cruelty of the system is dramatically apparent. The natural human instinct to protect the helplessness of childhood makes people who have not dividends at stake resent any advantage being taken of that helplessness; whereas the exploitation of adults does not arouse the same feeling of pity and indignation because people, even those without dividends, are not accustomed to recognize the equal helplessness of adults in face of the existing economic order. Then, too, as our child-welfare workers are at pains to point out, the health of the growing child may be permanently impaired and his proper physical and mental development thwarted by excessive labour at arduous tasks; while his legitimate claim to some degree of acquaintance with the three R's is denied him when he is kept out of school in order that he may augment the family income through his labours. Indeed, the literature of the reformers of child-labour conditions, like most literature of reform, impresses one with the desire of its authors to right a lesser social evil in so far as is compatible with the careful preservation of the greater evil from which the lesser springs.

It is hard to discover any proper place for sentiment in this matter of child-labour. There are, as this paper sees it, two logical attitudes towards the up-bringing of children, both of which depend for justification upon the attitude which is to be taken towards life itself. If the purpose of life be hard labour for the many with excessive ease for the few, then the children of the working masses, as the labour-motors of the future, should of course be reared with a proper regard to their future effectiveness as labour-motors. That is, they should not be required during their period of growth to perform labours which will incapacitate them, physically or mentally, for their more profitable exploitation later on, when they should normally be more powerful and productive machines. Here the reformer has a logical place. Employers of child-labour, be they industrialists, or parents who use their children's labour to assist them in their own occupations, are likely to overwork their little employees, the industrialist through shortsightedness or indifference, the parent through ignorance or necessity, or both. The

reformer, by securing the passage of laws regulating the hours and conditions of child-labour, and prescribing a certain amount of compulsory "education," may do much to correct this tendency, and thus insure a greater- degree of health and a lesser degree of stupidity in that larger life of exploitation which awaits the exploited children of the poor.

But there is another, and we are inclined to believe a more legitimate conception of the purpose of life than this, namely: that life is given to us to be enjoyed; and the only true enjoyment of life consists in fulfilling the inherent law of being, which is physical, mental and spiritual growth. "The best man," says Socrates, "is he who most tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he *is* perfecting himself." If one accept this simple and logical view of goodness and happiness, then one must repudiate the economic exploitation, not of children only but also of adults, for the man whose nose is kept securely tied to the grindstone of physical necessities will have precious little leisure in which to perfect himself or to give thought to the proper development of his children. If he is obliged to work for a wage less than the amount needed to support his family, then if his children are to be adequately fed and clothed and sheltered, they must perforce be set to work at some gainful occupation, however much better it might be for them if they could play a little, or go to school. It is unfortunate, but people must eat before they can grow, and the only way they can get beyond a preoccupation with mere eating is to rid themselves of the gourmand that devours all their surplus—that is, of the land-monopolist.

It is land-monopoly which, in the last analysis, makes it necessary for people to put their children to work; because land-monopoly means high rents and low wages. The connexion between land-monopoly and child-labour is especially clear, since seventy-two per cent of the child-labour in this country is agricultural and by far the greater number of that seventy-two per cent of rural child-workers are the children of tenant-farmers. Because of the extortionate demands of the landlords, the tenant-farmer is obliged to use the labour of his children in order to make ends meet; and in this connexion it is significant that tenant-farming and child-labour have both shown a very considerable increase in this country in recent years.

With the causes of child-labour thus apparent, it would seem that people who can regard with complacency such evils in our social order as

starvation-wages or a “normal” unemployment-condition involving a million and a half-workers, must be either fools or knaves when they concern themselves with child-labour on anything but a strictly utilitarian basis. As for those whose enlightened love for childhood teaches them that the development and happiness of these little ones depends upon the removal of the economic disabilities which hamper all workers, their place is certainly not among the ranks of the reformers.

S. L. F. 2. xi. 21.

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## SCRAPS OF PAPER AT WASHINGTON

THE Washington conference last week did the regular thing, the expected and invariable thing, in adopting the Root resolutions concerning China. These resolutions followed the stereotyped form in such case made and provided, with no more significant verbal deviations than one sees sometimes in obituary-resolutions over the memory of some defunct lodge-brother. Drafting these resolutions was no tax upon the resources or the mentality of Mr. Root; anyone who had a moderate knowledge of European diplomatic history could close his eyes and dictate them from memory. They pledge the conferring Powers to respect the sovereignty, independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China; to provide “the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself effective and stable government”; to use their influence for the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and trade of all nations in the Chinese market; and to refrain from taking advantage of present conditions in order to secure special rights or privileges in China.

The adoption of these resolutions puts this paper in a position not to show just what we have all along meant by intimating that the published decisions and agreements of the conference are of no importance whatever, but that its secret agreements and decisions are extremely important. Our readers are by this time aware, probably, that the last significant squabble over a market was over Morocco, and that this squabble culminated in the late unpleasantness of 1914. Well, the squabbling nations adopted precisely such resolutions, not only once but twice—at the Madrid conference in 1880, and at the Algeciras conference in 1906. These resolutions were

backed up by various other formal public declarations to the same effect; as for instance in 1901 and 1902, when France gave public assurance to Morocco on several occasions that she had no designs whatever against Morocco's integrity or independence. Nothing could be fairer or handsomer all round than the public attitude of Great Britain, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy towards Morocco. Any complaint about it would have seemed hypercritical, any suspicion of it would at any time have been bitterly resented by the right-thinkers and hundred-per-centers of all the nations concerned. Any publication which ventured to warn its readers to take their time about accepting it at its face value, would have incurred all the superstitious displeasure that falls upon those who do not promote the popular illusions about statesmen and statecraft.

Just so. But this is what really happened: France wanted an economic monopoly in Morocco; England wanted one in Egypt; so the two Governments came to a secret understanding whereby, in consideration of France letting England alone in Egypt, England should not stand in France's way in Morocco. This agreement was made on 8 April, 1904, by the two Foreign Secretaries, Lord Lansdowne and M. Delcassé; and it did not become public until November, 1911, and then only by accident, and its existence was not suspected, or even dreamed of, in either France or England until that time. The date of this agreement is noteworthy—8 April, 1904. The Act of Algeciras, pledging all the Powers to respect the sovereignty and integrity of Morocco, was signed 7 April, 1906. Therefore, when France and England signed that Act, the secret agreement between them had been in force just one day short of two years! Furthermore, it was in January, 1906, three months before the signing of the Act of Algeciras, that the British and French Governments entered into the secret military and naval "conversations" that never became known until 3 August, 1914. Finally, in April, 1906, the same month in which the Act of Algeciras was signed, the British and Belgian military authorities entered into their secret arrangements for co-operation.

So much, then, for the value of the published agreements of an international conference. If this paper be thought over-cautious for its incorrigible suspicions of the Washington conference, and of the Root resolutions in particular, we adduce the foregoing as fair reason for putting the burden of proof on those who think, or rather think they think, that this

conference and these resolutions are somehow “different.” The war of 1914 was “different”; for quite a long time it was different, and those whose foresight was as good as their hindsight, those who merely asked to be shown wherein it was different, were answered with the “one plain argument” that Lord Peter offered his brethren, in the “Tale of a Tub.” But it looks in retrospect quite as other wars look; quite as sordid, quite as commonplace, quite as unproductive of any of the beneficent results that were so hopefully expected from it. We now have a conference composed of precisely the same kind of people that composed the conferences of Madrid and Algeciras, representing precisely the same sort of interests, actuated by precisely the same motives, and conferring over precisely the same sort of issue. Wherein, then, can this conference be reasonably thought different, and where is the slightest tenable ground for supposing that its methods or its upshot will be different?

There is no difference whatever, and can be none. One pack of dogs fighting over a bone behaves like any other pack of dogs that ever fought over a bone. Introduce a bone amongst any pack of dogs, and you can foretell precisely how the dogs will behave. Introduce a parcel of alien exploitable territory amongst a pack of nationalist politicians, and you know to a certainty what they are going to do. There is no clairvoyance about it; anyone who knows enough to come in when it rains, probably, can manage this very moderate feat of intelligence. Morocco was good exploitable territory in the ’nineties. France, Germany and England were great capital-exporting countries, due to the fact that landlordism had pre-empted domestic economic opportunity and was charging a monopoly-price for access to it. Therefore the only thing that could happen, did happen. Through the secret trades and deals that we have just mentioned, one nation secured an economic monopoly in Morocco, and finally, in stark violation of every international agreement, like the Root resolutions, and in cynical disregard of its published pledges, consolidated a political control that extinguished Morocco’s political and administrative sovereignty.

China to-day is the plum. China, in the first place, has the finest assortment of natural resources yet unexploited by the great exporting Powers. Second, her immense population constitutes the largest potential trade-market. England attacked China in the early ’forties, and pocketed a port. Then France stepped in and took a slice of South China. Then Russia

cabbaged certain areas in Mongolia. Then latterly Japan picked up some highly valuable odds and ends of territory, and when the war of 1914 provided her with a truly golden opportunity, she became as busy as a bee. But now, in addition to these freebooting brethren who are already on the ground, there is another great exporting Power to be considered, which stands in the same relation to China as Germany to Morocco in 1900, i. e., the United States. Germany did not own an inch of Moroccan soil, and never asked for anything more than a fair field in commerce; but she already had a good trade going with Morocco and naturally wanted to develop it; quite as naturally, too, Germany disliked being crowded out by the economic monopoly which France, with the connivance of England, was busily establishing. Similarly, the United States does not own any Chinese land, but she has a huge deal of exportable capital that could find very remunerative employment over there, much more so than at home. Land in the United States began to bear a monopoly-value about 1890; consequently she was forced into the ranks of the exporting nations, making her debut in full-fledged economic imperialism in 1898. She was comparatively a late-comer, but has developed the policy with great energy, and her development, as every one knows, has been tremendously accelerated recently, by sheer force of circumstances. Although the United States wants no territory in China and would probably be as well satisfied with an honest open-door trade-policy in China as Germany was in Morocco, still China, as an exploitable market, looks just as good to the United States as it does to any of the other exporting Powers who have been for years buccaneering in the Yellow Kingdom.

One must estimate the Root resolutions by the light of these facts; and this is precisely what the journalists, and especially our liberal contemporaries who write decorative nonsense about Mr. Hughes's statesmanship and the wonderful things that can be expected of it, never take the trouble to do. The man who in the course of the last seven years has learned a thing or two about the diplomacy of imperialism will read the Root resolutions and say that they are admirable and first-class, quite as noble and disinterested as those of Madrid and Algeciras; and after that, he will think no more about them. His interest will then be to guess which way the secret trades and deals will go. Would it be better business, say, for England to afford Japan a little substantial *quid pro quo* in a private way, or

to afford it to the United States? Would Mr. Balfour do better to make up to his strongest commercial competitor, personified by Mr. Hughes, or do as Lord Lansdowne did in 1904, and combine with the next strongest to oust the strongest? The answer is not difficult.

Bill Nye once spoke of stopping at a hotel which printed a bill of fare chiefly, he thought, as a literary effort. Judged in this way, the Root resolutions are very interesting and commendable. For their content of fact, however, one would be wise to wait awhile before accepting them. When the secret understandings which accompany or ensue upon them are indicated—as inevitably they will be indicated—by the attitude taken towards China by the various nations and groups of nations, one will be better able to decide what they are worth.

A. J. N. 7. xii. 21.

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## THE "SANCTITY" OF TREATIES

THE Senate's debate goes on quite as though the Washington treaties had in themselves some actual significance for the American people. The public's conception of the force and sanctity of treaties is one of the most curious instances of mass-illusion to be found in all the realm of fancy; and yet no generation since the first treaty was made has had such profound and weighty experience of the unreliability of treaties and their makers, such overwhelming evidence of the futility of putting any confidence in either. It might, indeed, until very recently, have been thought that we had reached that stage where, in this respect, all the people could be fooled all the time.

That stage, however, as Lincoln said, is never reached; and to strengthen suspicions in those who have them, and to arouse suspicions in those who have them not, we have several times drawn the historical parallel between the Washington conference and those of Madrid and Algeciras. We now go on to remark that there is no better example of the duplicity and chicanery of treaty-making statesmen than that which is exhibited by the treaties of 1831 and 1839, the so-called and miscalled Belgian treaties, the famous "scrap of paper." The history of these treaties shows quite clearly what flimsy pretexts are set forth for foreign policy; that continuity in foreign policy is a figment of the imagination; and that the real business of

diplomacy over Belgium was territorial aggrandizement and the control of dangerous commercial competition.

These treaties were not Belgian treaties, but treaties covering the whole of the Netherlands; they were Dutch-Belgian treaties. The making of the Dutch-Belgian treaties necessitated the tearing-up of one of the main provisions of the treaty of Vienna which united Holland and Belgium. Lord Palmerston was responsible for making a “scrap of paper” of that solemn instrument. Why did he do it? What principle was involved in separating the Dutch and the Belgians after so short a union, a union which was believed by the statesmen at Vienna to be essential to the peace of Europe? With Palmerston, the matter was solely that of preventing Belgium from falling into the hands of the French. The coast from the Scheldt to the French frontier, stretching far and wide on England’s weakest flank, had been a source of a thousand grave fears and forebodings to British statesmen during the war with France. A recurrence of such a situation was, from the viewpoint of British interests, to be prevented at all costs. On the other hand, Talleyrand desired mightily that France should incorporate Belgium. He knew as well as Palmerston the value of the Belgian coast to France, in case of another war with England. Evelyn Ashley, the biographer of Lord Palmerston, puts the whole matter in a nut-shell when he says: “To side with Holland would have been contrary to all the traditions which Palmerston had inherited from Canning. To acquiesce in French aggrandizement would have been little short of a national disgrace.” No one can read the record of that disreputable business without being left with the impression that the Dutch and the Belgians were merely pawns in the game played between Talleyrand and Palmerston.

What then happened? A treaty was drawn up in 1831, separating Belgium from Holland. This treaty was signed by Britain, France, Prussia, Austria and Russia. No sooner was this done than the two States that had been neutralized began a bitter row about the division of the territories of Luxemburg and Limburg, and during eight years the quarrel grew in intensity, threatening the peace of Europe with crisis after crisis, until the Powers had to meet again, reopen the whole question of the separation of Belgium from Holland, and draw up a new treaty to end the dispute. This second treaty was signed at London, 19 April, 1839. Briefly, this is the history of the so-called Belgian treaties.

One will search the treaty of 1839 in vain for any guarantee to Belgium, for Lord Palmerston himself purposely omitted it. No one Power, according to the treaty, could go to the assistance of Belgium. All the powers signatory to the treaty had to act together. Moreover, the general guarantee which might be constructed out of the phraseology in the treaty of 1839 does not concern the neutrality of Belgium at all; indeed it is not given to Belgium but to the Netherlands. Yet in 1914 Britain's pretext for going to war was Germany's threatened violation of Belgian territory! In taking up that unprecedented position Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey reversed the policy of Gladstone and Granville; for at the time of the Franco-Prussian war, Great Britain made treaties with the King of Prussia and the Emperor of the French for maintaining the integrity of the sovereign State of Belgium, and preserving her territory against invasion by either force. These treaties which were made for the duration of the war and one year after, were, according to Mr. Gladstone, more stringent measures for the protection of Belgian neutrality than the general guarantee of 1839.

Strangely enough, at the London conference of 1871, while these new treaties made on the one hand between Great Britain and Prussia, and on the other by Great Britain and France were in force, it was laid down by the Powers that "no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the contracting Powers." Nobody at that time seemed to notice how this extraordinary decision affected all the treaty-making of forty years in connexion with Holland and Belgium. Neither Russia nor Austria consented, *or was asked to consent* to the changes made by the agreements of 1870 in the treaties of 1831 and 1839; and some international lawyers, indeed, were of opinion that these treaties were automatically nullified. Be that as it may, the important thing is to observe the evidence that treaties are made to be broken when it is expedient to break them. What Gladstone and Granville succeeded in doing in 1870, was impossible of achievement in 1914 because of secret agreement and understandings among France, Russia, and Great Britain, which tied the hands of the British Ministry. As a member of the secretly-fashioned Triple Entente, Britain was powerless to act in the true interest of Belgium when the crisis arose.

Now a new set of circumstances has arisen which threaten to make Belgium the occasion of further quarrels between Great Britain and France.

About a year ago France caught Great Britain napping, and made a secret treaty with the Belgians, and in that stroke crowned the efforts of Talleyrand and destroyed the policy which Palmerston had at heart when he broke the provisions of the treaty of Vienna for the purpose of separating and neutralizing Holland and Belgium. Britain can not now, any more than ever she could, stand idly by and see the triumph of Talleyrand's policy with regard to Belgium. If the Belgian coast were a danger to England during the Napoleonic wars, how much greater danger would it now be, after France has discovered what effective submarine-work can be done from that coast! A well-informed Flemish politician recently told the parliamentary correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* that the Franco-Belgian treaty is regarded by the militarist party of Belgium as the sheet-anchor of their policy; further, that a French propaganda is being carried out in Belgium through schools, lectures, theatres, films, and the press, and that it is largely attended by strong abuse of England. Whether this be all true, or only in part true, the fact is that a secret Franco-Belgian treaty does exist, and that its only possible objective is that of anticipating a conflict with Great Britain.

Treaties!—what are they worth to the peace and prosperity of peoples? Anyone can make them, anyone can break them. When our liberals and their ilk of incurable sentimentalists, and the masses who regard public treaties as meaning in some sense what they say and as made in some sort of good faith—when these are tempted to lift up their eyes unto Washington, we respectfully suggest that they remember the treaties of Madrid and Algeciras, and peruse the history of the Netherlands treaties of 1831 and 1839.

F. N. 22. iii. 22.

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## THE NEW LEISURED CLASS

BY all appearances, we are rapidly approaching the time when the "leisured class" that waxed fat on rent and interest will become the helots of the bureaucratic class; if, indeed, we be not there already. If so, the old theory of the leisured class will soon be on its way to limbo, and with it will go innumerable theories and ideas such as the idea of the exploitation of

producers by landlords, or the socialist's theory of the exploitation of the labourer by the capitalist class. The private appropriation of rent and the ownership of the tools of production, have done long service to the revolutionary tendencies of the individualist and socialist, but all without making any considerable dent in the existing economic system. The unequal distribution of wealth has not been checked; the leisured class has diligently gone on owning and exploiting; the producing class, which includes labour and capital, has diligently gone on being exploited. But now there seems every possibility of a new, large element, a distinct class, coming in with a view to a most rapacious exploitation of both the leisured class and the producing class, and possessed of unlimited powers of exploitation.

In short, it appears that the producers and the leisured class have entered upon a fierce struggle for existence with officeholders; and the former do not stand the ghost of a show, for all the weapons are in the hands of the latter, except the irresistible weapon of the boycott, which the former have neither the sense to understand nor the courage to use. Indeed, the producers and the leisured class are devoid even of a sense of protest, for the laws made by the officeholders do not permit protest. The Darwinian notion of the survival of the fittest seems in for profound disparagement, for the fitness of the fittest is being speedily nullified. The law of the jungle has been superseded, and the law of the bureaucratic parasite is in a way to rule every activity of life. How long a time it seems since the day of Herbert Spencer, a solitary voice crying in the wilderness of economic heresy! how long a time it seems since he told us what we were in for! Few paid any attention to him. He was a high-brow, a philosopher, an impractical person; devoid of business experience, a calamity-howler, an alarmist, he put incendiary notions into the heads of ignorant men, and tended to make them dissatisfied with that station in life unto which it had pleased God to call them. Indeed it might be said that in "Social Statics" and "Man Versus the State," Spencer was something dangerously and reprehensibly akin to a bolshevik. He was agin the Government. Well, but for all that, here we are, just where he said we would be! The State has just about absorbed the man. The officeholders have become all-powerful, and the producers—labour and capital—and the leisured class alike, stand before their indiscriminate voracity, helpless and appalled, like a litter of guinea-pigs before a python.

The new leisured class, the bureaucracy, has an immense fecundity. It multiplies its kind like rabbits, nay, like shad, like house-flies. Nothing, moreover, stimulates this reproductive power like a state of war. Most of us remember Washington a dozen years ago; many of us remember it in the days of the famous “billion-dollar Congress.” Think of it now! No, there is nothing like a war for making a bureaucracy truly prolific, for multiplying departments of the State, and making a horde of officeholders thrive where a handful throve before. In France, according to a current newspaper-item, one person out of every forty in the population is an officeholder! Every item of paternalistic legislation foisted upon a country by officeholders—prohibition, housing-laws, labor-laws, laws providing for this or that commission, this or that board or bureau or conference—every such item means a new litter of officials, inspectors and what not; and a consequent new creation of vested interest in officeholding, and a new lot of insatiable mouths set sucking at the veins of the producing class and the leisured class.

The officeholder, moreover, unfortunately has not, as far as we can see, a single quality to justify his parasitism. The leisured class that battened on rent and interest had, by and large, some virtues, some sense of obligation, often imperfectly and capriciously expressed, no doubt, but present and active. Its members played a more or less beneficent part in the communal life; a part which, at any rate, was meant to be beneficent. They maintained a kind of official interest, sometimes a genuine and fruitful interest, in the things of the spirit, in literature, art and science. As a whole, the leisured class had some culture, and there is no doubt that under the existing economic system, culture was almost wholly dependent upon the leisured class for such promotion as it got. The leisured class, too, was useful for the service—too little recognized or appreciated—of setting a standard of social life and manners which was for the most part agreeable and becoming. Of the new leisured class, however, nothing of the sort can be said. It is notably characterized by ignorance, stupidity and venality. Its activities benefit no one but itself. It cares nothing for culture. As for manners, it seems to have been born with a genius for offence. If it is possible to do a thing either civilly or rudely, the officeholder may be depended on to do it rudely. As far as one can see, in short, the officeholding class is devoid of any sense of responsibility to anything but its own maintenance in place and power.

As a result of the officeholder's pernicious activity, industry has everywhere to-day become largely a routine matter of cutting losses, reducing staffs and closing plants. Great numbers of producers, the world over, have lost interest in the business of production. Many of them freely say that they have decided to work no longer for the benefit of government; they are tired of sweating out the wherewithal to feed officeholders; and they have shut up shop, taken out what fragments of their capital they could salvage, and retired. As for the leisured class, there is precious little left of it, and what is left is in an immediate way to be less. Perhaps, after all, the extinction of the producer and the leisured class, is, from their own point of view, not greatly to be dreaded or deplored. The officeholders have, as the slang of the ring-side goes, "got them where they want them," but what of it? True, they might rebel, but they will not, because there are laws against rebellion, and we must all respect these laws because officeholders have made them, and because the Bar Association frowns on disrespect for law, and so does Mr. Root. So there seems really nothing for the producer of wealth—the labourer and the capitalist—and the leisured class as well, but to face extinction; and again what of it? Extinction is preferable, anything is preferable, to the continuance of a condition in which the producer is the helot of the officeholder, the servile creature of a dominant State.

F. N. 5. iv. 22.

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## ABANDONED ROADS

"THERE seems to me," writes a friend of ours from abroad, "to be a desire now not so much to organize and regulate life as to create, beautify, and enjoy it. The two aims should perhaps not be contradictory; but in the last generation they certainly seemed so, and I am afraid that the organizers will no longer be able to sit in the coachman's box and keep the creators in check, with whip and rein."

The change to which our friend points seems to mark the difference between the old generation and the new; and it has set us reflecting upon the conflicts that are now so rapidly coming to the surface of our social life. Viewed in one light, the conflict between fathers and children is a perpetual, recurrent fact; what was nectar to their fathers is proclaimed, in the taste of

the young folks, to be very small beer indeed. It is doubtless sad that this should be so; the creatures that build coral reefs have more venerable ways, and are quite content to go on adding their calcareous carcasses to the dead mass that lies beneath them: and whilst the result is not a very stimulating or lively existence, it goes to make what every nice, serious person would ungrudgingly regard as a solid achievement.

Now, the business of reform, regulation, and organization would be a much more satisfactory field for an intelligent person if human society were a coral reef, and every member of it a loyal, hundred-percent polyp. As things go, however, no “constructive measure” is likely to last much longer than its sponsor, and the stones that slay the prophet probably will not lie long enough in place to form a burial cairn. Nothing seems so certain about a reform as the fact that the next generation will itch to reform it; and when it comes to treating the ideals upon which the reform has tacitly or openly been based, the younger generation usually finds a way of making short work of them without going through any other ceremony than thought.

All this is very remarkable at the present time. The older generation in America, whose last fine flowers in the domain of thought were William James and Josiah Royce, was above all things a confoundedly earnest collection of human beings. Its chief interest was, it seems fair to say, with the machinery of the political State; and it was very much disposed to patch it and tinker around with it in order that the wretched contraption might not creak so loudly and proclaim so baldly that it *was* a machine, and not an organic growth of living communities.

Human nature being the naughty thing that it is, there was always the possibility, which the progressive and serious thinker dreaded, that some one would put sand in the valves or open up the throttle and tear loose, or do something equally dreadful, not specified in the regulations for a safe and sane commonwealth. Instinctive dispositions and tendencies which could not be supervised or at least registered, by expert official persons, were looked upon as perverse, atavistic, and inimical to progress. But while progress was its very watchword, the older generation was in fact complacently conservative, in that it supposed the goods of life were already established in existing customs and institutions, and that it needed but a proper modicum of regulation, and a steady amendment, to bring us within sight of the Perfections.

In sum, the older generation was highly interested in making economic, social, and political institutions go, and was a little indifferent to both their actual direction and their end. What happened is notorious. The war gave all the uplifters and sub-uplifters a shocking jolt; and when they recovered consciousness they found a generation around them that was no longer interested in trying to make the machinery of society more perfect, but that sought so to provide that their own lives, for a little while at any rate, should be lively and enjoyable—no matter what condition the machinery might be in, or, for that matter, whether any machinery existed. With the war in its memory, and the smell of new wars brewing in the witches' cauldron of diplomacy, the younger generation committed the little heresy of doubting whether the future was likely to be much better than the present. The older generation had sniffed at enjoyment and had clung to "work," "service," and "uplift" because it fancied that the best was yet to be. To deny this was to deny progress, and to deny all the quantitative values of a community that every day was growing more literate, more sober, and more "democratic."

The younger generation, on the other hand, would apparently rather have its mess of pottage right away than be remembered in the family will as the inheritor of an estate it might never live to possess, especially since all that a perfect estate would offer would be a steady and satisfactory supply of pottage. Perhaps these young people are a little oblivious to the necessity for continuity in human undertakings, and to the fact that a human being's present is determined by a past that pushes him forward and a future he must make some slight efforts to anticipate; but once the seed corn has been stored, the younger generation is quite right, it seems to us, in holding that there is no excuse for letting the present crop rot on the ground, or eating it in a panic of indigestion for fear that next season's crop will not be so good.

At bottom, it is not the failure to take life seriously which makes the younger generation let so many respectable things go hang; it is rather a passionate refusal to sacrifice life itself to respectability—a refusal to sacrifice joy and freedom to duty, service, loyalty, and a score of other praiseworthy notions which were ever on the lips of the older folk, and occasionally well within their grasp, but for whom joy, the joy of being free, and freedom, the freedom to enjoy, meant next to nothing.

Unfortunately, the older generation is for the most part in command of all the established institutions from the school upward and outward; and since there seems to be small prospect of introducing joy and freedom within these respectable precincts, or rather, of giving them room to exist there, it is only natural that joy and freedom should lay down avenues of their own. The progressives complain that no one will keep up the old roads and pay the annual tax of labour. In our callousness, we think that the complaint is a little amusing. Where did those roads lead to? The shambles. Who followed them? The sheep. If the younger generation is indeed running wild, it is rather quaint to hear moral indignation coming from the mouth of the butcher.

The younger generation has reason to believe that time is a cheat, and the future is time's basest accomplice. It is wisdom to cultivate the present moment, and the present place, and the present opportunity, for this is like plucking flowers from a heavily laden plant, and is the condition of there being other flowers to cultivate in future. The older generation did not seem to understand this; at any rate, it snatched its flowers furtively, and was always ready to fetch up some thumping moral reason for doing so; as, for example, beautiful flowers do not *hurt* anyone, or by cultivating flowers the species might be *improved*, or by demanding flowers one provides *work* for the gardener; in short, any reason but the sensible one, namely: that flowers are beautiful, and their presence makes the senses tingle.

So we might continue the parable. The generation that connives at jazz, reads Mr. D. H. Lawrence, and likes to walk on ground that angels fear to tread may well appear to be lost—aye! lost to civilization—among those who were content to see the individual wither as the world grew more and more. But sometimes it looks as if the world of progress and political reform and mechanical improvement and moral uplift and wars for democracy—in brief, the world of the United Grand Junction Ebenezer Temperance Society—had been on the wrong road, and that the younger generation is getting back, by blind fumbling and feeling, upon the main track.

L. M. 12. iv. 22.

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# DEBTS THAT ARE NO MORE

OF late years a number of American statesmen and near-statesmen have put forth the dictum from time to time that it would be an unprecedented enormity for a Government to repudiate its foreign indebtedness. These statements have been made with particular emphasis before committees of Congress that have investigated, not too searchingly, matters growing out of our present peculiar relations to Russia. Like most of the dicta of politicians, they are not strictly accurate. Repudiation has not been an uncommon proceeding, and many a Government is alive and kicking to-day whose frustrated creditors have long since either charged off their bonded investments to profit and loss, or compromised on refunding-operations which netted them a fraction of the principal. Most of these defaulting Governments are apparently on excellent terms with that model of fiscal probity, Secretary Hughes, who would not even deign to speak with the representative of a Russian Government which has forsworn the Tsar, and, in principle at least, all his debts. Moreover, during the past few decades, one out of every four of the sovereign States of this Union which Mr. Hughes so appropriately represents in their foreign relations, has indulged in the doubtful business of repudiation, and got away with it.

Back in 1870, the council of the Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, a British organization, compiled a list of a score of Governments whose foreign indebtedness, in part or in whole, was in default. The aggregate amount was close to $200 million, a great sum in those days, and of course did not include domestic indebtedness in default, in which the corporation had no interest. The list included three of our States, which were in default for upwards of $10 million. A few years later the same organization compiled a list of governmental loans of various kinds that had been defaulted or partly defaulted in the past half century. The total, with interest omitted, ran to about a billion dollars.

Greece defaulted on the interest of its 1824–25 loans for upwards of half a century. In 1878 this indebtedness, with interest, had reached about $50 million. The Government then effected a compromise with its creditors by redeeming the old bonds with a new issue at thirty cents on the dollar. Yet the diplomatic representative of Greece is received at Washington, and

during the recent war the American Government amiably loaned the Greek Government about $50 million.

Spain is another country with which we enjoy diplomatic relations, which has twice been insolvent since King Philip V began rolling up the national debt by borrowing $40 million to lay out gardens for his enjoyment, in imitation of those at Versailles. After the revolution of 1868–76 its creditors went scratching, and again after the Spanish-American war. In 1882, a Spanish Government scaled down the national debt from nearly two billion dollars to a little over one billion, but that had nothing to do with our opening hostilities against the defaulter sixteen years later, though perhaps in view of Mr. Hughes's attitude, it should.

In 1881, Rumania wiped off the slate all except twenty-one per cent of the value of certain outstanding certificates. Yet we loaned the Rumanian Government $25 million during the war, an investment of negligible value as measured in military results. Earlier in the century, Portugal converted a debt of $50 million into one of $32,500,000. Turkey has been a consistent defaulter, and British bankers appeared to encourage Turkish insolvency for a long period, through a series of larger and larger "refunding" loans, at progressively higher interest; or to be exact, at a rate of interest that remained nominal while Turkey received less and less of the principal until she was getting considerably under half the par value.

Among our South American neighbours, defaulting on foreign obligations has not been sufficiently uncommon to merit special attention. As for our major associates in the late unpleasantness, neither England nor France is above reproach. Charles II closed the British exchequer and defrauded the State's creditors of £2,800,000, though subsequently somewhat less than one-fourth of this was paid. Revolutionary France issued some forty-five billion francs in assignats, pledging the "public faith" in their redemption. In time these sank to one-half of one per cent of their original value, and though some of them were redeemed with "mandats" at the rate of thirty-eight for one, the value of the "mandats" likewise faded. This is a species of progressive repudiation which might well merit the attention of M. Poincaré; and while he is about it, he might get some precedents on defaulting by looking into the history of the $50 million French loan of 1870.

Our own continental money, issues of which were estimated by Hamilton at a third of a billion dollars, fell to one one-thousandth of the original rating, and, after constant talk of redemption, was permitted to drop out of use and value altogether. Of course, in later years, the paper currency of the Southern Confederacy similarly became reduced, with greater excuse, to mere scraps of paper; and the "national debt" of the Confederacy, estimated as high as a billion dollars, became properly chargeable to profit and loss, including the $15 million in bonds arranged with our friends the British bankers in 1863. Though the Confederate Government lived to a ripe old age as compared with the transitory regime represented by M. Bakhmetiev, as far as we know Mr. Hughes has made no move for the recognition of this solemn public obligation on the part of the Government that succeeded to the one headed by Jefferson Davis in the Southern States.

The founding fathers who are held in such high regard by the Harding Administration went in for repudiation on a broader scale than merely serving up their currency *à la Russe*. Massachusetts as early as 1747 redeemed a public debt of £2,200,000 by paying half the sum, in silver. Early in the century, Mississippi and Louisiana disowned certain public debts. Rhode Island flatly refused to pay Revolutionary obligations. Pennsylvania and Maryland failed to pay interest on their debts. Soon after the Revolution, Virginia "redeemed" the State issues of paper money by funding them at the rate of 1000 for one.

Coming up towards the middle of the century, we find Mississippi in 1842 repudiating a bond-issue of $5,000,000 issued for the State bank in 1838. In 1837 the Government of Michigan authorized an issue of $5,000,000 in bonds. Of this about $3,000,000 was by agreement guaranteed by the United States Bank of Pennsylvania, but that institution failed before any considerable sum was paid into the State Treasury. The State arranged redemption only on the basis of what had been paid in, though the bonds had been purchased at full value by European holders.

The people of Minnesota in i860 voted a special amendment to the State Constitution repudiating $2,275,000 in State bonds issued to underwrite a private railway-project which had not materialized. After several attempts to rescind popular repudiation had failed, the State Supreme Court declared the amendment unconstitutional; but it was not until 1881 that the creditors

got any consideration, and then they had to be content with a new bond-issue at fifty cents on the dollar.

Louisiana in 1874 had a Sitate debt of $42 million. The Governor recommended the repudiation of about half of this and the refunding of the residue to $12 million. This eventually was done, but even on the reduced total, the interest was repudiated for a period of years and finally was arbitrarily reduced. Likewise, in the late ’seventies, North Carolina scratched off the State debt to the tune of nearly $13 million, to which must be added several million dollars in arrears of interest. South Carolina about the same time refunded the State debt at fifty cents on the dollar, incidentally repudiating several millions outright. Georgia cancelled $600,000 in State railway-bonds in 1869 and indulged in other repudiations during the next decade. Alabama took French leave of responsibility for some $15 million in State bonds and endorsements. Florida turned its back on two State bond-issues, one of $3,900,000 held largely abroad. Among the other State Governments that engaged in similar financial peccadilloes were Arkansas, Tennessee and Virginia.

Thus there is a long catalogue of American cancellations, involving many millions in obligations held in foreign hands. If Mr. Hughes is aware of it, we can not see how he can consistently continue to serve these reneging States and their populations in his present capacity. Whenever he writes a pious note about Russia, one would think that the ghosts of all these dead American obligations, slain by due process of law, would rise up to mock him. To us it appears that under the circumstances there is a choice of two possible courses for Mr. Hughes to pursue in order to retain his self-respect. One is to get his Government to refuse to associate with any of these erring States until they have made full restitution with interest to date. This could easily be effected by having the Harding Administration decline to accept Federal taxes from the citizens of these States until they have recognized all the fiscal proprieties. The second course is for Mr. Hughes to resign. We do not know which of these courses would more effectively rebuke the inhabitants of the dozen or more States concerned. The relative disadvantage of not being permitted to pay one’s income-tax or of not being honoured with the official ministrations of Mr. Hughes involves delicate comparisons which we do not pretend to be competent to make.

H. K. 5. vii. 22.

## THE NEED FOR SYNTHESIS

UPON returning home from a recent adventure in conversation, we found that we had carried off two scraps of comment to which we had given, in the first instance, no special attention. Our partner in discourse had said that when, as a university student, he had wished to get some general notion of the structure and function of living matter, his masters had required him to spend most of his time in studying the parasites in the stomach of a frog; and again, in another connexion, he had remarked that Professor J. Arthur Thomson, the editor of the "Outline of Science," had never made any "original contribution" to the stock of scientific knowledge.

Now that some subconscious process of the mind has brought these two observations into conjunction, it seems to us that each serves to illuminate the other, and that both together cast a certain amount of light upon the problem of specialization. Our friend is altogether at outs with the system of the specialists; and yet his own thought is so much influenced by the thought of these very specialists that he denies to Professor Thomson a place among scientists of the first rank, simply because he—the editor of the "Outline"—has to his credit no such achievement as the discovery of a new parasite in the stomach of a frog. Whether or not Professor Thomson has made any such discovery, we have no means of knowing; but if we were obliged to give him some sort of rating, we should first inquire whether he has accomplished in the volumes of the "Outline" a genuine synthesis of scientific knowledge; and if we found that he had succeeded in this great enterprise, we should say that his contribution has more creative value and originality than that of any of the specialist whose name has figured recently in the press.

If ever there was a task that required all the strength of an able and mature mind, it is the labour of synthesis in this day of specialization; and yet it is symptomatic of the state of the sciences that in the universities the work of synthesis is degraded almost to the vanishing point. The broader the field covered by any given course, the more likely it is to be assigned to a cub-instructor who is not yet out of his academic knee-pants. The great and the near great often confine themselves to grubbing minutiae out of

narrow fields of research, and then leaving the uprooted facts to shrivel away in unread monographs. If this order of affairs could be reversed; if the young instructor could be set to work in a special line of research, from which he would advance, as his powers increased, in the general direction of philosophy, there might be some chance that the particular would be brought into vital relation with the general. As the mass of particulars increases, the labour of organization and interpretation becomes day by day more difficult; but instead of devoting their energies to this great work, most of our abler scientists allow their energies to be absorbed by their devotion to special fields of research.

Like most of our contemporaries we have become so lost among the trees of new knowledge that we can not see the forest. When we take as a measure, the ratio between the knowledge of the individual man, and the sum total of human knowledge, it appears to us that men are becoming increasingly ignorant as the years go by; the world as it is actually known to the individual has been expanding, of course, but at a far less rapid rate than the "known world" of science. That this process of expansion has been also a process of disintegration, some of us have felt only too keenly as we have watched the specialists move outward and disappear from sight along a thousand new paths of knowledge which stand to the generality of human individuals as just so many new indications of things that they can never know.

Whether the totality of existence, known and unknown, constitutes universe or multiverse, is a matter of small consequence here. The point we are trying to make is simply this: that in a lawful and orderly universe, the method of the specialists tends to reduce the *known* world of the individual man to chaos; while on the other hand, even in actual chaos, a broader science might help to raise the *known* world of the individual man into something like a universe. Such, at any rate, is our belief; and if we had the opportunity to act upon it, we should shut the ablest men of science out of their laboratories for a decade or so, and force them to sit down together, with their masses of data in front of them, and think things over. If they did not eventually produce something like "a larger synthesis," we should turn them loose again, and begin in our blindness to pray for the coming of a wiser generation.

G. T. R. 2. viii. 22.

## THE UNKNOWN DIPLOMAT

THE unknown diplomat at Washington is again at his old tricks of influencing American opinion by insinuation and innuendo. He has become indeed a notable figure in the conduct, or misconduct, of American foreign affairs. He came into his own during Mr. Wilson's Administration, apparently as an adjunct to open diplomacy. Under the anonymity of a "high authority" or a "high official" of the Administration, he grew and flourished and his observations, particularly on the affairs of countries with which Mr. Wilson enjoyed unfriendly relations or against which he conducted private warfare, were printed throughout the length and breadth of the land by respectable newspapers which would without question fling into the wastebasket an anonymous communication from an unofficial source.

In the matter of Russia especially, Mr. Wilson's unknown diplomat displayed a consistency which the ultimate standpatter might well envy. Beginning shortly after the Bolshevik revolution, this gentleman launched a series of inspirational predictions about Russia, all of which without exception subsequently proved untrue. Again and again he demonstrated to his own satisfaction that the Soviets were doomed and must inevitably disappear in a few weeks. Again and again, with characteristic perversity, the ignorant Slavs failed him. From his watch-tower on the Potomac he would report Petrograd consumed with flames, or his careful vision would discover Trotzky and Lenin chasing each other around the Kremlin, craftily hurling bombs at one another's heads, and anon dining together amiably on buckets of bourgeois blood. In October, 1919, he heralded "official reports" received in Washington, possibly from Mr. Wilson's voices in the air, that General Yudenitch had taken Petrograd and that Trotzky and the whole Bolshevik crew were dashing for their lives into Siberia, zealously hunted by the entire Russian population. Unhappily, at that time General Yudenitch and his merry boys were fleeing ignominiously over the Esthonian border. He had not captured Petrograd and there had never been any likelihood of such an accomplishment. But mere fact and experience never swayed the unknown diplomat from his course. At the moment of Mr. Wilson's

retirement to private life the anonymous spokesman was still buoyantly giving out his advices from the most reliable sources that the Soviets could not cling to power more than two months longer.

In one respect the unknown diplomat slipped up in his portrayal of the Russian scene. He failed to report the nationalization of women, that final infamy of the Bolsheviki, which for a considerable period served the pious horror of our Rotarians and other moral conservationists. The honour of discovering this particular wickedness, as we recall, belongs to Secretary Baker's Military Intelligence Section, which during the great conflict and for some time thereafter dwelt in the realm of imagination pure and undefiled. On the other hand we believe it was the unknown diplomat who, after considerable criticism had been aroused over Mr. Wilson's peculiar manner of conferring self-determination on the Haitians, discovered that the island of Haiti was populated by a race of the wickedest kind of voodoo worshippers. For a century or more the Haitians had imagined themselves to be of the Roman Catholic persuasion, as far as religion was concerned, and they support a pair of bishops and a full set of clergymen of that faith; but presumably this is by way of keeping up appearances.

The great advantage of this Ku-Klux or blind-tiger fashion of diplomacy is that it lends to useful mendacities an air of official authority without the assumption of any official responsibility. It is not surprising therefore that the unknown diplomat should have survived Mr. Wilson's Administration. To his latest manifestation attention has been directed by Mr. de la Huerta, Mexican Minister of Finance, who has recently visited us in the attempt to secure from American bankers, American oil-men and the American State Department, permission for Mexico to function as a regular nation in good standing. Mr. de la Huerta, it was reported, secured the draft of a working-agreement with the bankers and the oil-men, and apparently thereafter he was received amicably by President Harding and Secretary Hughes. Yet he had scarcely left the White House before the familiar voice of the "high spokesman of the Administration" was heard over the length and breadth of the land protesting that the Mexican Government apparently had no intention of ratifying any of Mr. de la Huerta's agreements, and that the attitude of the Mexican Government in regard to American landholders in Mexico was still unsatisfactory, especially in respect to lands expropriated in certain Mexican States, which were being paid for in "practically

worthless bonds." Mir. de la Huerta pointed out that there was no ground for such harsh criticisms, that the various agreements referred to were being moved towards ratification, one having actually been signed by President Obregon, and as for the "practically worthless bonds" for expropriated lands, they had not even been issued yet, and the Mexican Government was making every possible effort to give them real value.

After Mr. de la Huerta's statement the unknown diplomat bobbed up again, apparently in a chastened spirit, with the explanation that he did not impugn the good faith of the Mexican Government, and if Mr. de la Huerta could put his hand on an authoritative translation of the original discourse he would see nothing in it to which he could possibly object. This would indicate that the unknown has a sense of humour, for his outgivings invariably appear in indirect discourse, as if they were whispered to the reporters in Washington rather than handed about on the usual official mimeographed forms.

Mr. de la Huerta has done all Americans a service in directing attention to this mysterious diplomatic Grand Goblin. Of all the collection of ornery critters that swarm about the national capital he is about the meanest and lowest, as well as indirectly one of the most expensive, and the sooner he can be eliminated from the political zoo the better it will be for all of us.

H. K. 9. viii. 22.

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## CULTURAL NATIONALISM

NOT long since, we found ourselves engaged in conversation with a visitor from overseas, who had just seen for the first time the two huge railway-terminals in New York City. "They are splendid," he said. "In them I see a genuine expression of the American creative genius. They are *yours*, because you are an American. They express *you.*" In the course of the next half-hour, our visitor expressed emphatically the opinion that the people of this country must remain in a condition of spiritual under-nourishment until they have evolved an art which is distinctively American and is therefore peculiarly fitted to their spiritual needs.

If the individual man be primarily a "national being," then of course he can realize himself only in so far as he shares in, and helps to develop a

“national culture.” Obviously it should be his business to concentrate his attention upon such works of art as his countrymen have produced, to emphasize the national qualities of these productions, and to make these qualities the special source of his enjoyment and inspiration. Under certain circumstances, however, this procedure leads to results which may fairly be called fantastic. During the nineteenth century, for example, the educated men of more than one small nationality in Eastern Europe deliberately turned their backs upon the highly developed language and the rich literature of their imperial masters, and shut themselves up within the confines of a peasant-speech and a collection of folk-songs. According to the theory of the nationalists, the way of escape lies now through the creation by each of these nationalities of a great national literature; but how long do they think it will be before Latvia, for instance—a country of German landlords and Russian governors—will produce a Goethe, a Schiller, a Pushkin, a Dostoievsky, a Tolstoy?

If it be true that man is primarily a *national* being—if he be born to his national culture, as men were born to their social station in the feudal age—then the quality of his national inheritance is all-important, for nothing that does not belong to his nation can ever really belong to him. If, on the other hand, the individual is first and foremost a *human* being, the national classification can have no primary significance; the richest national heritage is a handicap, unless he learn to disregard its limitations, and the poorest birthright is a blessing if its poverty drive him out into the broad field of humanism.

If the humanist is right, the great hope of culture in America lies in the fact that we in this country have not yet agreed upon a definition of “American culture.” The greatness of our opportunity consists in the very fact that thus far we have set up no definite boundaries of nationality where culture is concerned. So long as nothing belongs to us as a nation, there is nothing that may not belong to us as individuals; so long as our taste has not been nationalized, there is always the possibility that it will be humanized. The humanist knows that in the realm of the arts, the one criterion of the right to possess is the ability to enjoy; he sets up before the artist those models that are, by the canons of art itself, the best, and his taste fosters and stimulates, where nationalism coddles and deforms.

G. T. R. 6. ix. 22.

## THE FOUNDING STEPFATHERS

OUR excellent contemporary, the *Christian Science Monitor*, recently published some articles giving a list of six countries to the south of us over which the United States Government has established a greater or less degree of financial hegemony. The supervision ranges from control of the customs to actual dictatorship. The countries are Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Bolivia, and though their total population is somewhat less than eleven million, their area is nearly fourteen million square miles, or almost half the area of the continental United States, and their potential wealth in minerals, forests and oil is almost beyond computation. It is worth noting that arrangements have recently been made or are in the making for these various countries to negotiate loans from American bankers, at the appropriately large interest that obtains in such transactions, aggregating some $135 million. Before the war the total foreign debt of these countries came to less than $120 million. If we add to these figures the enormous value of the pickings snapped up by our concessionaires with the aid of our imperialist officials, and the profits they derive from peon-labour on a wage-basis of twenty cents a day or thereabouts, with the pressure of American bayonets to keep the workers at their tasks, it can be seen that this policy of southerly expansion and penetration is immediately highly profitable to a limited but apparently most influential element of our citizenship.

The imperialist process began back in the days of President Roosevelt’s neat little revolution in Panama, by which that Republic conveniently severed itself from Colombia and became a satellite of the American Government. Before the late war, Panama had a national debt of some $5000. Reorganization of its finances under an American fiscal commission was completed last year, at which time the debt of the little Republic was shown to have increased to the sturdy figure of seven million dollars, most of it held in the United States. The 400,000 inhabitants have further troubles in prospect, for arrangements are now being made for a new American loan of $10 million.

It was under President Taft that some of our banking-interests kindly took over Nicaragua, after the revolution of 1909, which was organized and financed in the United States. The revolutionists drove out the President of the country, but the Nicaraguan Congress elected another who was equally unsatisfactory to the American intriguers. The new President was beating the revolutionists all along the line, when Secretary Knox took advantage of the fact that two American adventurers, part of an insurgent band, had been killed in the fighting, to send in some 2350 marines to put over the revolution and see that a candidate agreeable to American interests was declared president. When the Congress refused to ratify the dummy, it was dissolved with the aid of our brave lads, and Nicaraguan independence passed into history. The ensuing treaty gave us the right to build a canal across the country at any time we should be moved to do so, and granted the United States valuable leasehold-concessions on either coast. Before we began our altruistic endeavors, Nicaragua had a national debt of $2,500,000. By the time we had established law and order, the country was mortgaged to our bankers for some $15 million, and those same bankers were in control of its railways and were collecting the customs and administering the public finances. These financial founding stepfathers are now, on behalf of the people of Nicaragua, negotiating a new loan of three million dollars from themselves. Curiously enough, the Nicaraguans have all along exhibited the most callous lack of appreciation for these various and sundry favours conferred by their Uncle Samuel.

Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Taft made tentative beginnings in our southerly imperialism. It was not until the pious Mr. Wilson came in and events on another continent engrossed public attention that the American Government really got into its stride in this matter. It was under those staunch pacifists and anti-imperialists, Mr. William J. Bryan and Mr. Josephus Daniels, the one transmitting the orders and the other furnishing the marines, that the American Government appropriated Haiti and Santo Domingo and began to perfect various other arrangements involving Central and South American real estate. It was possibly through coincidence that whenever Mr. Wilson delivered one of his peculiarly effective excoriations of the imperialist policy of the Kaiser’s Government, Mr. Daniels’s valiant boys would set about shooting a few hundred more Haitians or the State Department would issue an order for the overthrow of another native Government that stood in

the way of making the Caribbean safe for American bankers. Both Haiti and Santo Domingo were seized by force of arms and have been held under military dictatorship. A short time ago, with a considerable flourish of trumpets, Mr. Hughes announced that we were prepared to withdraw our forces from Santo Domingo as soon as the Government functioning there under our guns complied with certain conditions. These included the ratification of all acts of the military regime of the United States, the validation of the so-called final loan sought by our bankers, and an extension of the powers of the American General Receiver of Customs which would legally make that officer the financial dictator of the country. Here again the ungrateful natives have raised a considerable uproar of protest and the whole matter is still in process of solution. A loan of $6,500,000 was imposed on Santo Domingo last year and the plans for Haiti contemplate a loan of $40 million, which will give the banking-interests concerned a substantial mortgage on that country.

Under Mr. Hughes the policy of extending our financial hegemony throughout the hemisphere has been further developed, and two great countries, Peru and Bolivia, with a combined area of some 1,250,000 square miles, have come into the American financial solar system. Our bankers are planning to favour Peru with a loan of $50 million and in preparation for this, a former officer of our State Department has been made administrator of customs in that country, the customs-system has been reorganized, and the programme includes the establishment of a bank of issue under the supervision of our interested bankers and the revision, in the interests of American concessionaires, of the laws relating to oil-lands. Bolivia has already obtained a loan of $24 million, in return for which American bankers have stepped into the Banca de la Nacion, and a commission of three members, including two Americans, has been appointed to take command of the revenues and the fiscal affairs of the nation.

Paraguay has also selected an American customs-adviser, but though the country has recently suffered from political disturbances, our marines have not yet slipped in to establish law and order and no loans have been effected.

The recent American policy in Cuba has of course been consistent with these other developments of financial imperialism. In conformity with the “recapture” clauses which our Government originally inserted in the

Constitution of the Cuban Republic, our General Crowder has been sitting in Havana as a sort of uncrowned dictator of the island for the past twenty months, and under the direction of our State Department, arrangements for a bankers' loan of $50 million have been worried through the reluctant Cuban Congress. The obvious indisposition of the Cubans to sign up for this sizable mortgage has resulted in some monitory brandishing of the Big Stick by Mr. Hughes, and at present the Cubans seem faced by the unfortunate alternative of accepting the loan, with its attached financial and political conditions, or else having their semi-independent political administration supplanted by one manned directly by American political place-holders of the type which is already making our name so malodorous in the region of the Caribbean.

A variant of this established imperialist policy was revealed recently when the Administration made an effort to plant a new American financial colony in Africa. Here the scheme for which the Administration sought the approval of Congress was for a loan of five million dollars to Liberia, to be made from the United States treasury. It developed in the discussion of this measure that two-thirds of the money was to be devoted to paying off at par the various bonded obligations of the Government of Liberia, a good part of which had been bought up by speculative financiers at twenty cents on the dollar, and the rest was to be dissipated in a few years by American fiscal administrators, with aggregate salaries of $100,000 a year, to be appointed to take charge of the annual Liberian revenues of $160,000. This philanthropic plan to divide five million dollars of our money between the speculators and the politicians on a sixty-forty basis was luckily deferred until after Senator Borah had exposed its true significance, and since such appropriations involve debates in Congress which are likely to prove embarrassing, it is to be assumed that hereafter the Wilsonian technique of bankers' loans with the co-operation of the marines will be followed. Such matters can be managed quietly without stirring up inquisitive senators.

In sum, it would appear that with the aid of the political arm our bankers have already gathered in mortgages on a considerable part of South and Central America. The process is apparently not unlike that followed by British imperialists in the case of Egypt, when successive loans under military duress reduced the country in course of time to such a state of fiscal dependence and helplessness that a formal protectorate in the interest

of the bondholders became inevitable. In such cases as Haiti and Nicaragua, our financial penetration has virtually assumed the substance of annexation, though all the legal formalities have not been established.

Since this expansionist policy has been pursued with equal zest under a Taft, a Wilson and a Harding, it is fair to assume that it is now a fixed policy, and according to the laws of financial gravitation it would seem inevitable that in course of time all the South American republics will become satellites of our banking-interests. The metaphor is perhaps unfortunate, for instead of planetary dependents circling placidly about their worshipful sun, these will be satellites wildly straining at their orbits and hating the centripetal power and the system which holds them in confinement. The situation that has already developed in Haiti, in Nicaragua and elsewhere indicates that the maintenance of our imperialism must involve us in a series of sordid and dirty little wars against peoples unaccustomed to the repressions and exactions of alien domination. When the maladjustments of the masters of the Versailles conference work out to their inevitable conclusion and we find ourselves involved in a new clash with fresh combinations of great Powers for the mastery of the world, we must be prepared to reap what our political and financial founding stepfathers are so assiduously sowing for us through the length and breadth of this hemisphere. Instead of one Ireland, hoping, praying and contriving for our downfall, we shall face a whole continent of Irelands which will see in American dissolution their only hope for freedom.

H. K. II. X. 22.

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## THE FAILURE OF A THEORY

ACCORDING to our interpretation, the history of Russia during the last half-dozen years is extremely damaging to the Marxian theory of the social revolution. The stimulus to revolt seems to have been felt almost as keenly by the Russian peasantry as by the industrial workers, and certainly the peasants have been more successful than the proletarians in the post-revolutionary conduct of productive operations. In a country like the United States, where the agricultural population has never borne such burdens as were laid upon the Russian peasantry, the progress of industrialization and

the growth of the proletariat may increase the likelihood of revolt, but it does not by any means follow that the ability of the labour-force to control and carry on the operations of production will increase in like proportion. Indeed it seems to us that the possibility of the achievement, by any sudden change, of anything like economic democracy, is decreased as the scale and scope of industrial and commercial operations is extended.

For the Russian peasant, the process of revolution was the simple one of the Jacquerie. Reconstruction was likewise a simple matter, for when the landlords had been expelled, the peasants extended to the estates a system of allotment and cultivation which had previously been in vogue within the holdings of the village-commune. Thus it was not necessary for the peasants to unite under a centralized leadership, or to accept and act on a complex programme, or to adopt overnight a new way of life; they had learned by years of hard experience to maintain themselves in comparatively isolated, semi-cooperative groups, and each of these groups was prepared to engage in self-directed labour on the landlord's estate, the morning after the manor house was burned.

The industrial workers were in a different case altogether. For them, as for the peasants, the revolution was a comparatively simple matter; but the task of reconstruction was infinitely complex. Here there was no question of extending to new factories and new mines a system of production with which the workers were already familiar. Year after year, within the narrow limits of their holdings, the peasant-communes had functioned in the actual conduct of agriculture, but the labour-unions, where they existed, had had no such significance in the conduct of industry. Indeed the industrial workers had had no experience in self-direction, except in respect to occasional withdrawal of labour.

Being thus without practical knowledge of the conduct and control of production, the industrial class was faced with a problem much more complex than that which confronted the peasantry. If the peasants had not been prepared by experience for the task of reconstruction, they could still have worked out their destiny by experimentation. The comparative self-sufficiency of the communes would have permitted a wide diversity in opinion and procedure; but in the case of the factories nothing of the sort was possible. Here the only alternative to a return to the old regime seemed to be the common action of millions of people in accordance with a plan

which very few of them understood, even in theory. In our opinion, any attempt at reconstruction on such a basis puts upon human nature a strain which it simply will not bear. The demands that it makes in the way of unanimous and intelligent action on the part of the masses, and wise generalship on the part of their leaders, can hardly be met this side of Paradise. If, then, Russia has not already relapsed into the economy of pre-war days, it is not so much the ability of the Bolshevik leaders that has prevented it, though they have sometimes shown themselves wiser than Solomon; it is first of all, we think, the experience of communal life which has taught the peasants how to utilize in some measure of co-operation, the possibilities which were created by the revolution.

An industrialized society gives its members little practical training of this sort, and the advocates of revolution are not much concerned to make the shortage good. Usually they preach a doctrine which can not become effective in practice until it has been very generally accepted in theory, and must then be acted on hastily and in wholesale fashion, without previous experimentation or experience. In the prospect of such action, we find the promise of disaster only, followed by a slow, painful return to the old regime.

It seems to us that those who contemplate the democratic control of productive operations by the producers, should be able to see that the acceptance of a theory, even its unanimous and intelligent acceptance, can not adequately prepare the workers in industry to participate in the new task laid out for them. The ideal of democratic control makes a great appeal to certain elements of organized labour; but if the aim is ever to be realized, it must come about through the gradual extension of co-operative methods to one plant after another. If the resources of nature were free and labour were at a premium, this gradual extension would be much easier than it is; but in any case there is no prospect that the actual conduct of industrial operations can be successfully democratized by any wholesale revolution.

G. T. R. 25. x. 22.

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## AMOR FATI

IN one of his recent essays, Mr. Santayana speaks of the immense value in the world of thought, in the world of the arts, of a complete indifference to forms of life that are beyond one’s power of realization. He is discussing snobs and snobbishness; and he suggests, apropos of the instinct of social emulation, that nothing could be better calculated to advance the material well-being of society: it is in ages and among races in which that instinct is weakest, on the other hand, that we find the most marked variations in the sphere of the intellect. Mr. Santayana cites the Hindus who roll in the dust, rapt in their separate universes, oblivious of the destiny of king or merchant; but we do not need to go to Asia to perceive that, so far as the life of thought is concerned, nothing is more advantageous than a certain fatalism in all mundane affairs. It has been plausibly argued that the decline of English letters dates from the hour when the writer was enabled to compete with the gentleman. Charles Lamb and his circle, for example, knew nothing of that social aspiration which has had so deleterious an effect upon their successors; and who will deny that among the circumstances that have retarded the development of our own literature, opportunity, as we cheerfully call it, has been chiefly to blame? Man is a being that thinks, but only by compulsion; and when there are so many paths to fortune, and all open, why should he subject himself to that discomfort which, as Renan said, is the principle of movement? For this reason, the closing of the American frontier may fairly be taken to portend a certain intensification in our literary life.

The probability is, indeed, that so long as other and more natural forms of life are not beyond one’s power of realization, the mind can not, or at least will not, be indifferent to them. If that is true, the absence of caste and class in our civilization must be regarded as a positive detriment to literature; for writers, like all craftsmen, are happiest when they possess a sphere of their own, a self-sufficient sphere out of which they are never tempted to stray. That ancient tag about “the world forgetting, by the world forgot” really states the first principle of the conservation of energy in the literary life: such modern writers as Thomas Hardy and George Gissing exemplify it, and it was their acting on this principle that justified, as the late Alexander Teixeira de Mattos observes in one of his recently published letters, so many of the “men of the ’nineties.” They “hadn’t clubs, homes, wives or children,” the admirable “Tex” remarks; “lunched for a shilling,

dined for eighteenpence, and didn't want a lot of money. They cared neither for money nor fame; they cared for their own esteem and that of what you call their coterie and I their set." There we have the guild-spirit, the pride of the *métier*, out of which the art and literature of the past have come; but how far has not that pride been a consequence of the stratification of life in societies in which the individual has had virtually no chance of "rising in the world"? That heights can exist, as it were, at every social level, or rather that life is not entirely a matter of climbing the social bean-stalk, is an idea that seems to lodge only in minds that accept their level as predetermined. Thus the extremity of the old Adam is the opportunity of the new; and we may say that the star of hope rose over our literature on the day when the last barefoot boy in Missouri ceased to dream of inhabiting the White House.

It is certainly true that the writers of our generation have, as a class, begun to accept their fate. They have seceded, that is, from the bourgeoisie, and ceased to accept the verdict of their bankers as the last word on their own success or failure. Henry Adams justly remarked that the American mind of his day had less respect for money than the European or Asiatic mind, and bore its loss more easily; but he added that it had been deflected by the pursuit of money "till it could turn in no other direction." We can see the result in the American literature of the thirty years preceding the war: it was characteristic of the age of the "best sellers" that the chief preoccupation of its authors was the maintenance of a "standard of living," and few were those who were not driven by the fear of dropping behind in the race. That essentially alien ideal, to the pursuit of which we can trace the exaggerated "inferiority-complex" of the American writer as a type—for how can artists compete with captains of industry and preserve their self-respect?—that alien ideal no longer dominates our literary life. Our chief difficulty is that as yet no other ideal has taken its place.

The historians of the next generation who look back upon the American literature of our day will find in it, if one is not mistaken, all the traits of an interregnum of ideals. It will appear as marked, that is, by the habits of mind of the preceding epoch, oddly disoriented, fading, dissolving and at the same time undergoing all manner of indefinable transmutations; it will seem to bear a sort of intermediate character, as between a pioneer literature and a high literature in the proper sense. It is, in other words, the expression

of a will to create, in minds that are incompletely adapted to the creative life. The assumed necessity of having to justify themselves financially, to conform to public opinion, to be useful and to produce only that which is useful; all this, together with our faulty education and our lack of leisure, combines to prevent American writers from accepting their status and making a fine art of it: they have at bottom the mental constitutions of practical men; and an ingrained need of the approval of the majority whom they despise perpetually stands in the way of their strongest conscious desires. Hence the universal egomania and “tender-mindedness” of our contemporaries, their itch for publicity, their haunting fear of not being known, their desperate anxiety to keep up with every new idea, every new movement. They carry into the intellectual sphere the practices of the stock exchange, and for this there is a very good reason. Literature occupies only the upper levels of their minds, though it may occupy them so fully that they are aware of nothing else; but deep down, what still actuates them is a desire for a practical success.

In the normal course of things, the conscious cravings of one generation are likely to become the unconscious impulsions of the next. The passionate material desires of the America of fifty years ago have passed below the threshold of the consciousness of our own epoch. Meanwhile, the typical minds of our day, actuated unwittingly by those desires, have been filled by desires of a very different order. When the latter have been ploughed under the soil, we may reasonably expect a genuine literary movement in this country; indeed, all the signs seem to point that way. In things of the mind, however, nothing is automatic: literary evolution, like heaven, helps only those who help themselves; and the American renaissance will not get very far unless it develops that guild-spirit which is the exact opposite of the spirit of log-rolling. The bad habits of the writers of today are due not only to their inheritance, but also to the precariousness of their situation: our society is not sufficiently organized for them to be able to feel that they are voicing, or can voice, anything but their individual sentiments, and for this reason they lack confidence in themselves; for all their sincere intentions, they can not quite believe in the legitimacy of the parts they are playing. Towards the organization of society, which is perhaps indispensable as the condition of a high literature, they can contribute very little; but the development of a craft-sense, a sense of the art, not only of writing but of

being a writer, is within their power; and by means of it, by adhering exclusively to the standards and values of their *métier* and by steeping themselves in its traditions, they can prepare for the hour when society has need of them, and perhaps considerably hasten its coming. By so doing they will at least escape from that state of unstable equilibrium in which they now achieve so little that is good. “Let each one ask himself,” said Goethe, “for what he is best fitted, and let him cultivate this most ardently and wisely in himself and for himself; let him consider himself successively as apprentice, as journeyman, as older journeyman, and finally, but with the greatest circumspection, as master.” How different this attitude is, and how much more productive, than the prevailing attitude of our well-intentioned contemporaries. Strictly speaking, however, it is one of the logical consequences, in a human nature that exists by faith and will, of the necessity of accepting a limited status in life.

V. W. B. 17. i. 23.

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## FOUNTAINS OF JOY

CURRENT discussions of the philosophy of art remind us that, according to Goethe, a little common sense will sometimes do duty for a great deal of philosophy, but no amount of philosophy will make up for a failure in common sense. It is usually the case that as analysis becomes closer and philosophizing becomes more profound, there is a tendency to obscure certain broad general fundamentals which to the eye of common sense are always apparent; and thus very often the complete truth of the matter is imperfectly apprehended. A great deal of what we read about the arts seems in some such fashion as this to get clear away from the notion that the final purpose of the arts is to give joy; yet common sense, proceeding in its simple, unmethodical manner, would say at once that this is their final purpose, and that one who did not keep it in mind as such, could hardly hope to arrive at the truth about any of the arts. Matthew Arnold once said most admirably that no one could get at the actual truth about the Bible, who did not enjoy the Bible; and that one who had all sorts of fantastic notions about the origin and composition of the Bible, but who knew how to enjoy the Bible deeply, was nearer the truth about the Bible than one who

could pick it all to pieces, but could not enjoy it. Common sense, we believe, would hold this to be true of any work of art.

When Hesiod defined the function of poetry as that of giving "a release from sorrows and a truce from cares," he intimated the final purpose of all great art as that of elevating and sustaining the human spirit through the communication of joy, of felicity; that is to say, of the most simple, powerful and highly refined emotion that the human spirit is capable of experiencing. This, no doubt, does not exhaust its beneficence; no doubt it works for good in other ways as well; but this is its great and final purpose. It is not to give entertainment or diversion or pleasure, not even to give happiness, but to give joy; and through this distinction, common sense comes immediately upon a test of good and valid art, not infallible, perhaps, but nevertheless quite competent. It is, in fact, the test that the common sense of mankind always does apply, consciously or unconsciously, to determine the quality of good art. Great critics, too, from Aristotle down, have placed large dependence on it. One wonders, therefore, whether more might not advantageously be made of it in the critical writing of the present time.

A work of art—a poem or novel, a picture, a piece of music—may affect the average cultivated spirit with interest, with curiosity, with pleasure; it may yield diversion, entertainment or even solace, not in the sense of edification or tending to build up a permanent resource against sorrows and cares, but in the sense that its pleasurable occupation of the mind excludes sorrow and care for the time being, somewhat as physical exercise or a game of chess or billiards may do. But all this is not a mark of good art. Good art affects one with an emotion of a different quality; and this quality may be rather easily identified, provided one does not make a great point of proceeding with the stringency of a philosopher in trying to define it. Joubert said that it is not hard to know God, if one will only not trouble oneself about defining him; and this is true as well of the profound and obscure affections of the human spirit—they are much better made known in the experience of the devout than in the analysis of the philosopher. A critic, indeed, might content himself at the outset by laying down some examples of classic art, and saying that the emotion he wishes to identify, the emotion of joy, is simply what is produced upon the average cultivated spirit by *those;* and that the difference in quality between this

emotion and the emotion produced by another work of art, is a fair index or registration of the difference in quality of art between the two objects or examples. We have space but for one illustration, so for convenience we shall take it from the realm of poetry. Let us take two examples, both dealing with the valid and excellent poetic theme of the shortness of human life and the transitory character of its interests. First, this one:

How nothing must we seem unto this ancient thing!
How nothing unto the earth—and we so small!
O, wake, wake! do you not feel my hands cling?
One day it will be raining as it rains to-night; the same wind blow,
Raining and blowing on this house wherein we lie, but you and I,
We shall not hear, we shall not ever know.

Is the emotion wherewith this verse affects the average cultivated spirit, of the same order, the same quality, as the emotion produced by this—

> The cloud-cap'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like an insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

—or is the difference merely one of degree? Well, then this difference may be used at the outset by criticism, as the common sense of mankind does continually use it, as an index of the poetic quality of the two examples; and criticism can go safely on in assuming that to whatever degree a work of art succeeds in arousing just *that* emotion, so far can it justify its candidacy for a place as valid art.

We do not put forward this test as one to be used mechanically, nor have we any exaggerated notion of its importance. There are some very welcome signs that criticism, after long running derelict in fantastic extravagance, is beginning to come to its sober senses. Well, then, here, in this test that we speak of, is an implement of criticism that great critics have found extremely useful, but which has of late fallen into disuse—why not bring it out and use it again, not fanatically, but with judgment and discretion? It is primarily an implement for the critic to use upon himself in shaping the course of his criticism; the layman, as we said, has had the more or less

conscious use of it all the time. When confronted with the claims of this or that work of art, the critic will be greatly helped to get his bearings if for the moment he puts all other considerations aside, and asks himself with what order or quality of emotion, precisely, does this work of art affect *him*. Is it with a pleasurable emotion due to interest, curiosity, entertainment, diversion, or is it the emotion of felicity, of joy? No matter about the degree, but is it or is it not, in any measure, small or great, the *kind* of thing that he gets out of "The cloud-cap'd towers, the gorgeous palaces"? We do not say that this test will ensure his judgment; all we say is that it will greatly assist it.

A. J. N. 21. iii. 23!

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## THE MOODS OF MARCH

When daffodils begin to peer—
With, heigh! the doxy over the dale—
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

WHAT strange, indefinable emotions trouble our hearts anew each year at the approach of spring! This sweet complaint of the loveliest of the seasons, inconstant and yet insistent, invades the consciousness of king and cobbler alike all the world over. The most staid man of business amongst us is not altogether incognizant of its tremulous appeal; and sure it is that there is scarce an urchin of the streets who is not in some way aware of it. There are moments when the business man regards with no very friendly eye his desk and all the sad furniture which makes up the appurtenances of his routine-life; and when the ragamuffin feels no longer a sensation of glee at the kindling of his miniature bonfires of broken boxes, which, in the clear air of autumn evenings, were wont to transform with a lovely magic of their own the chilled curbstones of many a noisy, traffic-filled thoroughfare.

The very fish which disport themselves in the cold grey waters of the Baltic feel its influence, as does the tiniest seed buried deep under brown earth in the far-off plains of Siberia. In Africa, in April, at the time of the breaking of the heavy rains, enormous Negroes emerge from their smoky

huts and grinning up at the sun, set to work to turn over the steaming, fecund soil. In the Island of Jersey, the French peasants in their blue smocks busy themselves with planting their potatoes in exact geometrical rows. Indeed, with the coming of the warmer weather it is apparent everywhere that a great spiritual liberation has taken place throughout all creation.

Who is able to walk in the country during the month of March and not feel this astonishing awareness that the stern ordering of the world has been in some inexplicable way relaxed? From all sides the freshets, swollen high with melting snow, dance down to the rivers with a sound as of tinkling bells. In the rivers themselves the burden of ice which they have borne for so long grows less and less. At the lapping surface of the water the black river-stakes are still swathed in ice, but each succeeding sunset sees these white bandages diminished in size, while already, away out in midstream, great slabs of floating ice, flat and snow-covered, are being rapidly carried toward the sea. The wise white gulls are aware of what is happening, and in sedate lines stand upon these moving masses, as though, by some strange ordering, it had become their duty to help conduct this winter's wealth on its last journey.

Up the long country roads we make our way. The wheels of the cars have worn deep furrows, the way is ribbed with long, hard, dirty-coloured snow ridges; but behold! between these ridges there trickles a jocund, infinitesimal river. Glad sunshine is upon everything and there is gold and silver in the air. We branch off into the woods. The crows are abroad, but no longer, as in December, croaking of disaster as they wing their solitary way across naked, frozen tree-tops. They are on the ground now, and their grey beaks are continually piercing the soft, thawing soil. The first green grass is appearing in separate tufts—"leaves of grass" in very truth—delicate and tender and sweet-smelling. Not far off, where the slender stems of the birch trees stripe the dark shadows of the wood, is the place where the pussy willows grow. Already their soft buds are showing, though still clothed warm in furry down against the last few spiteful winds. Small wonder is it, so exquisite and quaint and unexpected is their shape, that the children in the little town should later follow us along the streets with pretty cries of "Give me a pussy willow." Even children, it would seem, have the wit to appreciate the unequivocal message that is brought into a winter parlour by the presence on the table of one or two of these slim brown twigs.

In the long-drawn-out English spring, the pussy willows are by no means the first heralds of the approach of summer. Long before they are ready to be plucked for the village churches on Palm Sunday, other flowers and plants have already reminded the rook-boys in the chilled, sprouting barley-fields that no winter lasts for ever. Under sheltering, crinkled leaves of the deepest green, pale yellow primroses have appeared. They are to be found everywhere—in the damp-smelling covers side by side with white, over-sensitive wood anemones, and in the moist, fern-grown ditches where cold-eared rabbits stamp in amorous delight or race for shelter back into their root-raftered burrows. It is the same in the English gardens. In many a sheltered terrace-border down in the west country, where all winter long the snaps of hard weather have been broken up by soft west winds from the Atlantic, the snowdrops first show their chastened, unassuming loveliness before ever holly and mistletoe have crackled on a Twelfth-Night hearth; and long before the coming of Shrove Tuesday many a brave crocus has thrust its spear petals up through the inert soil, for all the world like tiny chips that have fallen to the ground from the great sun itself.

What then, exactly, is the origin of these vague sensations of misgiving, of subliminal exultation, which distress us mortals each year in the months of early spring? Is it that at this time we become aware in an almost physical way of the fact that our mother the grain-bearing earth is once more quick, has once more been stirred to the very depths of her being by the caresses of her ancient paramour at whose tyrannical pleasure, for countless ages, she has danced through wide plains of eternally illuminated space?

Or is it merely the ubiquitous presence of virginal beauty that haunts us, virginal beauty that is so palpably, so indisputably present in every field and garden, every rubbish-heap and window box! The briefest glimpse of it has before now made poets run mad; and do we perhaps, whose moods are set to a slower tempo, impotently rattle the shackles of our standardized lives as “April comes like an idiot babbling and strewing flowers”? Surely it is here that the trouble lies. Through summer and autumn and winter we are content with our lot; we are neither irked by the restrictions that beset us, nor put out of countenance by any sudden demand of our inner spirits for a fuller, more gracious, more exciting existence. But with the coming of the soft winds and small, rain all this alters; and each one of us, old men and

children, young men and maidens, becomes terribly conscious of the fleeting, fluctuating nature of an existence which bears us forward to the grave, insidiously, inevitably, before ever we have had time or opportunity to experience that ineffable happiness which surely must exist somewhere, somehow, in a world where Beauty in her primal element is so convincingly revealed each year at the coming of the spring.

L. P. 4. iv. 23.

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## A SALESMAN DE LUXE

AFTER a period of secret communion with editors and bankers, Lord Robert Cecil has emerged upon the public platform to display his political wares and his engaging personality before the gaze of the vulgar. He is not such an heroic figure as M. Clemenceau, who came to us some months back to sell a somewhat similar line of goods; but on the whole he seems more persuasive, perhaps because he has a subtler technique. The earnestness of his manner is assisted by his presence, for in appearance he is, like our own Mr. Will Rogers, of a prepossessing homeliness; and if he does not, like Mr. Rogers, jump amazingly through a looped rope, he displays an equal agility in evading the entanglements of logic. Undoubtedly he is the most accomplished salesman of the many that Europe has sent over to impress us with its somewhat questionable stock.

It is a partnership that Lord Robert comes to offer us, a full partnership in the League of Governments. Here Lord Robert’s persuasiveness labours under some disability. It was only a few years ago that we entered into a partnership with these same associates. For two reasons, the venture left us in a dismal state of mind. In the first place, the character of the business was not as originally nominated in the bond. In the second place, the enterprise was disastrous to us financially; in fact we are still compelled to dig into our pockets to the extent of a billion dollars a year, in order to pay the interest on our losses. Moreover, our partners borrowed ten billion dollars from us on no security whatever, and, with one possible exception, none of them has given any indication of either desire or ability to pay back its borrowings. One is reminded in this connexion of the occasion when Mr. Morris Perlmutter was invited to take as a partner the son-in-law of one of

the memebers of the firm of Zudrowsky and Cohen. As Abe Potash pointed out to Mr. Perlmutter, the reputation of Zudrowsky and Cohen was such that "you wouldn't trust them the wrapping paper on a C. O. D. shipment of two dollars." The American people may not know much about the intricacies of European affairs; but against going into partnership with European politicians, they cherish an aversion similar to that expressed by Abe Potash against the son-in-law of Zudrowsky and Cohen. In fact, within recent memory, in what Mr. Woodrow Wilson called "a solemn referendum" on the subject, they registered their sentiment against partnership by a majority of seven million. Possibly Lord Robert, with the aid of his banking and editorial friends, may overcome this prejudice, but the odds are against him.

By way of bringing home to us the blessings of membership in the League, Lord Robert puts great emphasis on the curse of war, that "horrible and devilish thing." In demonstrating that war is wholly unpleasant and undesirable for the general population, Lord Robert is thoroughly convincing. There seems little question that he is sincerely opposed to war, or at least to large wars. In fact one enthusiastic newspaper, upon his arrival, hailed him as the angel of peace. In his monitions about war, however, we have noted that Lord Robert carefully avoids trespassing on one topic, the causes of war. Apparently he is not interested in the causes of war. We have recently passed through an international Kilkenny fight in which all the principal nations were engaged; what with diplomatic indiscretions, the publication of secret documents, and other revelations, the casual background is fairly complete. One would think that a first step towards avoiding wars would be a dispassionate, searching analysis of the causes of the world-war, and a careful study of possible means to eliminate the practices and methods that bred that war and are breeding others. Lord Robert and his League have avoided this plain method as a certain personage is said to avoid holy water. In fact, Lord Robert's prescription for peace is to give more power to the very agencies that fomented the last war.

"The League," announced Lord Robert, in his maiden speech in this country, "has been the means of settling several grave international disputes." Here it seemed that our visitor was getting down to brass tacks, and with high expectation one sped to his next phrases. What were these "grave international disputes" so happily nipped in the bud? Lord Robert speedily informed us. The League had saved Albania from invasion; it was

planning to save Austria from bankruptcy. This was his impressive list. Well, the population of Albania is equal to that of Rhode Island; the population of Austria is equal to that of Ohio. An invasion of Albania, deplorable as it may be, is scarcely of grave international import. As for Austria, we recall that when Austrian children were dying of starvation, the League displayed no great concern; but when Austrian banks, in which British interests predominate, threatened to perish of anæmia, the League suddenly awoke to activity and referred the matter to a commission headed by a heavily interested British financier. When one considers that when Poland invaded Russia on a land-grabbing expedition, the members of the League gave the invader their blessing; that when Poland snatched Lithuanian territory the League sanctioned the thievery; that when Greece hurled her forces into Asia Minor the League did nothing; and that when M. Poincaré seized the Ruhr, the League did not even dare to talk about it; when one considers the record of the League in these really important imperialistic outbreaks, Albania and Austria seem pretty small potatoes. Indeed, one feels that Lord Robert committed a tactical error in going into specific instances. He would be more convincing, one thinks, were he merely to smile and smile and be a liberal.

At the conclusion of Lord Robert's address, one of his auditors had the temerity to ask him whether he was prepared to advocate the scrapping of imperialism in the East, particularly in such places as Egypt, India and Mesopotamia, where alien rule rests wholly upon armed forces. Lord Robert answered promptly that he was opposed to "any policy which I could describe as imperialistic." He added, however, that he would not advocate the abandonment by a great Power of "any trust undertaken on behalf of a weak and struggling people," and that he "would not advocate any policy which would hand over the populations of great districts to disorder, bloodshed and slaughter." This is a splendid moral view; and it is unfortunate that the lesser peoples are so steeped in barbarism that they do not also appreciate what a blessing it is to be murdered and robbed by civilized foreigners rather than by one another. It is a view which shows that Lord Robert's heart is in the right place. "If I have blackjacked you and seem to be sitting on your chest and relieving you of your valuables," remarked the highwayman, "it is merely an exhibition of altruism. Had I let

you pass in peace, you might have fallen and hurt yourself, smashed your watch and lost your money."

It is encouraging to find a politician so heartily opposed to war and imperialism as Lord Robert. His speeches and interviews here have given us an excellent measure of his quality, his wonderful mental ductility. The impression is not different from that to be derived from the recent debate in Parliament, in which he took part, on ways and means for devising some sort of intervention in the Ruhr, to save Europe from falling into ultimate chaos. "When the League of Nations is proposed as the proper authority to intervene," wrote Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, M. P., in reporting the debate, "then Lord Robert says no. When something else is proposed, then Lord Robert says the League of Nations."

Perhaps Lord Robert may sell his plan of partnership in the League to the gentlemen, not always visible to the public eye, who guides the destinies of the American people. With the great American herd, still staggering under the burdensome debts piled up during the recent war-time association with European Governments, he will need all the charm and subtlety he possesses—and more. The general feeling of the population seems to be similar to that of Mr. Potash towards his sometimes business associate, Pincus Vesell. "That feller," said Abe, "got an idee that there ain't nothing in the cloak and suit business but auction pinochle and taking out-of-town customers to the theayter"; and later in a reminiscent vein, he remarked: "He's the kind of feller that if we would part friends, he would come back every week and touch me for five dollars yet."

"I do not ask you to enter the League," says our persuasive visitor, with characteristic directness. "I merely ask if you can afford to stay out." After some simple financial calculation, we'll say we can.

H. K. 18. iv. 23.

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## MECHANISM AND HUMANISM

OFTEN we wonder if "man's conquest of nature" is still being pushed with all the unquestioning self-assurance that characterized the work of inventors and technicians in *ante-bellum* days. It seems obvious enough that an improvement in technique does not necessarily connote a change for the

better in the life of man; and it is always a pleasure to discover that this disturbing idea has made its way into the mind of an expert. Recently the New York *Times* asked a number of technicians to answer the question, "What invention does the world most need?" and in reply one spoke out for some means of preventing inferior human beings from reproaching themselves; another called for an increase in the output of food; a third was interested in universal intercommunication (he was a radio-engineer); while the other five all emphasized the need for cheap and easily utilizable energy. One member of this last group says (just out of hand) that a cheap supply of power would put an end to poverty; while another takes it for granted that "It is desirable or necessary that civilization should proceed, for a moment, farther along the present lines of material progress," and assumes also that "our present civilization can develop a proper control of new material agencies as fast as these agencies are evolved."

Now it seems to us that the development of a proper control of new material agencies is the thing that can least of all be taken for granted. In view of the experience of the past, it would appear to be much more rational to reverse the situation; that is, to assume that the material agencies will somehow get invented, and to turn a major share of attention upon the social problems which are infinitely farther from solution than the technical ones.

Again, in regard to our technician's first assumption, it should be remarked that the European press of to-day is liberally sprinkled with articles that question not only the desirability but the possibility of continuing in the present line of material development. A German predicts "the ruin of the Occident"; a Pole prophesies "the downfall of Western civilization"; and indeed a good many Europeans seem ready to join in the condemnation which the Russian Slavophils pronounced long ago upon the culture of the "rotten West." The Slavophil theory was formulated shortly before the middle of the last century, at the time when railway-construction was getting well under way in Russia, and textile-machinery was being imported in considerable quantities from the factory-towns of England. The Slavophils did not ask for more inventions; they rejected Western science and technology outright, because these material agencies seemed to them wholly foreign to Russia, and because they believed that nowhere, not even in the West, could such agencies be humanized and controlled. It was the

purpose of the Slavophils to save Russia from the West, and the West from itself, by the revival and spread of village communism and mystical Christianity.

The Communists of to-day are as emphatic as the Slavophils ever were in their rejection of the notion that material progress translates itself automatically into human well-being; but instead of rejecting the material agencies of the West, as the Slavophils did, the Communists are attempting to master these agencies and to utilize them for the good of the masses. Communism, like Slavophilism, has a Messianic character, and the Communists, like the Slavophils, would teach us a fundamental fact that our Western technicians, and our people very generally, have missed—the fact that the basic problems of life are problems of humanism, and not of mechanism.

G. T. R. 20. vi. 23.

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## AN UNDELIVERED ADDRESS

THE train stopped at a small station on the plains in a Western State, and the President appeared on the platform of the observation-car at the rear. There was some lively hand-clapping, but it stopped suddenly when the President signalled that he was about to speak.

"My fellow-citizens," he said, "it is indeed pleasant to be welcomed by groups of citizens everywhere. It is plain that political friends and adversaries sink their differences in order to express their respect for the high office which I happen to occupy. I might easily delude myself concerning the significance of your enthusiasm, but from my knowledge of the past I am aware that you would greet any President in exactly the same way.

"You have been kind to me, and I will be frank with you. It has long been the custom of our citizens to demand that, when a plain man—one of you—becomes, of tener by a series of accidents than because of superior merit, the chief officer of the Government, he gives utterance to profound wisdom on every subject under the sun, early and often. The people like to ignore the fact that when a farmer or an editor becomes President he remains the same farmer or editor that he was before election. The office

confers honour, responsibility and dignity, but not learning or wisdom. Too frequently the President permits himself to be blinded to this truth by the eager acceptance, by large numbers, of all that he says; and, once he has fallen into error, he begins to believe that his words are prophetic or otherwise important. Thus he is led to consider himself endowed, by virtue of his position, with gifts that are bestowed by an inscrutable power upon leaders of men but not necessarily upon politicians; and in his anxiety to respond to the clamour of his fellows for an opinion on all subjects, he is bound to say many things that are ill-considered, puerile and unworthy. Eventually he is found out, for, in the long run, the people do find out. Then the people laugh him into oblivion and contemn him.

"My friends, the fault lies with you. Every man who attains to this high place, even a petty man, enters it with a resolve to do his duty, as he conceives it. If you would but permit him to mind his own business he might step down, at the conclusion of his term, with a reasonable amount of self-respect, and with the respect of his countrymen. But you insist on his being a philosopher, a poet, a financier, a statesman, an historian, a *bon viveur* and—most reprehensible of all—you almost force him to become a dictator.

"Your good-natured importunity has ruined men who might have proved to be good Presidents, cobblers who intended to stick to their last, but whom you forced to be vicars of God. I speak thus to you because I seem to have seen the light for a moment, and I wish to unburden myself while the inspiration lasts. By the time we arrive at the capital of your State, in a few hours, I presume that the Presidential habit will have got the better of me, and I shall deliver the address prepared for me by one of my secretaries, on co-operative farming, Greek drama, the gold standard, a universal tribunal, vegetarianism and infant damnation. Give me your earnest prayers. Farewell."

B. W. H. 8. viii. 23.

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## POINTING A MORAL

THE situation in the Ruhr, the *coup de main* of Italy and the consequent commotion in the Danube States, make this a most appropriate time to raise

an urgent inquiry of those who wish the United States to take a hand in Europe's affairs. What do they want us to do? We have raised that question before, and so have many others, and it has never yet been competently answered. We say competently, because it is no answer merely to reiterate some stock phrase like "The United States ought to join the League of Nations," or to say that our Government ought to cancel the Allied war-debts in return for an equivalent reduction in the German indemnity. Granted, for argument's sake, that the United States should do both these things; let us suppose that they were done to-morrow; let us, indeed, suppose that they had been done two weeks after the promulgation of the Treaty of Versailles. The real question is, what reasonable ground is there for assuming, in the one case, that matters would have gone one whit differently up to the present; or, in the other case, for supposing that they would begin to go differently the day after to-morrow?

Not a single interventionist has ever given an answer to that question, and none ever will. All who have tried to answer it have merely delivered some vague rhetoric about the "moral effect" of such action on the part of the United States; and this is rubbish. The war immensely fortified a universal faith in violence; it set in motion endless adventures in imperialism, endless nationalist ambitions. Every war does this to a degree roughly corresponding to its magnitude. The final settlement at Versailles, therefore, was a mere scramble for loot. We venture to say that there is no human being upon earth who can make anything else of it and look one in the eye while he does so. Now, suppose that the United States Government entered the war from the purest of altruistic motives and that it stuck by the Versailles treaty through thick and thin, League of Nations and all, can anyone in his right mind imagine that its "moral effect" would have kept Mr. Poincaré from looting the Ruhr and setting up his Napoleonic scheme of military hegemony in Europe? Could our moral influence have kept the Poles from grabbing Upper Silesia or, to come down to date, could it have kept M. Mussolini from laying his hands on Corfu?

To imagine such a thing bespeaks incredible ignorance and incredible credulity. Moreover, the United States Government did not go to war with disinterested motives, and every European Government knows that it did not. M. Poincaré knows it, and so do the Poles and M. Mussolini, just as well as MM. Clemenceau and Orlando and Mr. Lloyd George knew it at the

time of the conference at Versailles. To expect disinterested action on the part of our Government now is simply the amiable and hopeful *naïveté* of one who expects to catch a weasel asleep. But assuming that it might be, by some miracle, capable of disinterested action, what form could that action possibly take to be effective?

Fortunately, the cause of intervention has been so thoroughly discredited by circumstances that there is no use in saying much about it now. We doubt whether any politician would dare bring it before the country again. It seems that the time has come to point the moral; and in so doing, we come in sight of the one and only service that America can render —not the American Government, but such Americans as are candid enough and flexible enough to have learned a good many things in the past four years, and to have forgotten a good many as well. This service consists in pointing out that the matters at stake in Europe can not be settled by machinery alone; they must be settled by a wider culture, a firmer will and a better spirit. The League of Nations is machinery, and so is the World Court; machinery, moreover, devised for an entirely different purpose from that to which the interventionists would invoke it. This is plain to every one; as plain as that a reaper is not designed to pull a train. The thing is to abandon a blind and unintelligent faith in machinery, and to give oneself over to the promotion of a culture competent really to envisage a world-order of peace and freedom erected upon the only basis able to sustain it, the basis of social justice. Those who do this are the true interventionists; they proffer Europe the only real help that Americans can give. The interventionists here, and those abroad who ask our aid, never show, we regret to say, that they are concerned by the injustices that afflict Europe; they are concerned only by the inconveniences arising from her condition. Even the British liberals who lately addressed a communication to Americans at large, show hardly more than a perfunctory concern with injustice, but an enormous concern with inconvenience.

The time has come, in our opinion, to disallow all this and to reaffirm the revolutionary doctrine set forth in the Declaration of Independence, that the Creator has endowed human beings with certain inalienable rights; to give more interest to principles and less to machinery; to think less about acting and organizing and instituting, and more about establishing a culture that will afford a proper foundation for national action. The time has come,

in short, for inaugurating a really moral movement instead of protracting the succession of ludicrous and filthy hypocrisies which have so long passed for moral movements; for an interest in justice and a belief in human rights wherever there are human beings—in Egypt and Haiti, India and Santo Domingo, quite as much as in Corfu or the Ruhr. It is all very well to go about establishing justice and human rights, in the time of it; but the first step towards establishing them is to believe in them, and that is the step to be taken now.

A. J. N. 19. ix. 23.

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## WHAT IS EUROPE

THE curious disregard of geography which the average American often displays when he speaks of any country except his own, is strikingly illustrated by a good deal of the current talk about American intervention in "Europe." "Europe," we are told, is in a bad way, and the United States ought to help it out; "European" finances are all awry, and we ought to aid in putting them in order; the economic life of "Europe" is upset, and we should take a hand in putting it on its feet; and so forth and so on, similar, accordin'. What is this "Europe" that is so glibly talked about, and in regard to which our national duty is insistently declared to be so plain? Judging by the benevolent and hortatory stuff that appears almost daily in the newspapers, especially just after another contingent of sight-seeing businessmen and editors and statesmen has arrived from the other side of the Atlantic, Europe would appear to be a place somewhat like the United States, rather pent in so far as its area is concerned, beset by a few amusing or annoying local peculiarities that have not yet yielded to progress, and embarrassed by certain difficulties of language which are rapidly disappearing with the increasing use of English; but otherwise a homogeneous kind of a country which may probably be thought of and treated as a whole, just as at present we are thinking of and treating afflicted Japan.

Nothing could be more visionary or misleading. There is no such Europe. The name itself is only a geographical expression applicable to a continent, as the names of Africa, Asia or South America are applicable to

other continents; but within the area so named there is hardly a trace of political, economic or social unity or homogeneity. To think or speak of “a Europe” as one thinks or speaks of “a United States” is to assume the existence of similarities which in fact are almost wholly lacking. Europe is not a country; it is an aggregation of not less than twenty-seven different countries, each of which is as separate and distinct from any or all of the others as the United States is separate and distinct from Brazil or Newfoundland; not to mention half a dozen small communities which enjoy as yet only a qualified independence. Each of these twenty-seven or more States has its own Government, its own system of law, and its own economic and social life, wholly distinct from that of its neighbours; and the intellectual differences are, in most respects, equally marked. Two of the largest European States, moreover, are only the European portions of States which have the larger part of their territory lying in Asia, and whose policy toward the rest of Europe is determined quite as much by Asiatic as by European considerations. There are more languages too, than there are States; for not only do a number of the European States, as Belgium, Switzerland, Jugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, speak two or more languages, but there are also innumerable differences of dialect sufficiently well marked to amount in practice, in a State like Italy, to a difference of language.

This is the parti-coloured agglomeration of peoples, Governments, languages and international interests which ought really to be thought of when “Europe” is mentioned; an agglomeration with no political or social unity and with extremely little sense, so far as can be gathered from events, of common obligation. Some one will probably protest, however, that even if there is no organic political or social unity there are, nevertheless, certain common problems, and in particular certain common distresses, most of which owe their origin to the world war; and that it is to these that the United States is morally bound to address its benevolent aid. Take reparations, for example; is not that question keeping all Europe in turmoil? Or the war-debts; are not most of the European States entangled in these? Or foreign exchange; is not every European country struggling with its depreciated currency? Here, surely, are things in plenty for the United States to take hold of, even if it does not care to tackle everything and

launch a general clean-up. America ought to have a heart, and “go in.” Where there’s a will there’s a way.

Is there? Let us look a bit at that seductive appeal. America should help to settle the great European difficulties that have arisen out of the war. Lay that proposition athwart the map of Europe and observe the States upon which it falls. What do we find? To begin with, we shall discover that six important European States—the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Spain—contrived, to their everlasting honour, to keep out of the war, and were rewarded for their good sense by being also kept out of the peace-conference. None of them has any reparations to collect or war-borrowings of importance to repay: while their currencies, although depreciated, are at the present time in very much better condition than those of most of the former belligerents. Incidentally, they are all distinctly more pro-German than pro-Ally, and this also notwithstanding the war. Russia was out of the fray some time before the war ended; no other European Power seems particularly desirous to pick a quarrel with it; and its new gold-secured currency will shortly shift off into space the depreciated roubles in which a number of ardent patriots elsewhere have been speculating. Add together the populations of these seven States, and it will appear that about one-half of the population of Europe neither needs nor desires American intervention, either political or financial, so far as anything immediately connected with the world war is involved. We strongly suspect that, if the whole truth were told, they all hope very much that the United States will be so good as to let them alone.

How about the “Europe” of the one-time belligerents, of the nations which vowed before high heaven that they would act together until the great “enemy” was vanquished and an “enduring peace” enthroned? Are there any two of the former Allies that show much sign of agreement upon a method of handling the problems of reparations and war-debts, for example? Even Belgium and France, which joined forces for the invasion of the Ruhr, have not been able to make joint replies to the various British notes; while Italy, notwithstanding that it has kept out of the Ruhr, is at odds with both Belgium and France because neither of those Powers will consent to tie together reparations and war-debts in the same bundle. About the only value of the British notes that Mr. Baldwin and Lord Curzon have concocted is their demonstration of British incapacity in the face of an

international quarrel, and the manœuvrings of the Cuno and Stresemann Governments have wreathed no halo about the German mind; but the most convinced advocate of American intervention can hardly fail to see, if only he will reflect, that almost anything that any one of these mutually suspicious or openly hostile Powers liked, the others would be much disposed to reject. We have the ennobling spectacle of four great States, all agreeing that Germany ought to pay and ought to be made to pay, but wholly unable to agree as to how or how much it shall be made to pay, or how the payments, if any are obtained, shall be divided among the claimants; and this is the "Europe" which, it is insisted, America ought long since to have helped!

The whole plea for "doing something" in Europe is sentimental humbug and political claptrap; and it is mischievous into the bargain, because it is supported by men and women who know better, but who make no use of what they know. The only way in which the United States can intervene in Europe is by playing the game of some one of the quarrelling Powers, and that is what every Government that pleads for America to "come in" really wants. France would burn incense on every altar and light a bonfire on every hill if Mr. Coolidge would throw his arms about M. Poincaré and call him brother; but if by any chance Mr. Coolidge were to embrace Mr. Baldwin, the mud-slinging batteries of the subsidized French press would work overtime in hurling abuse. What would happen in Paris and London if the United States should express the opinion that the pressure on Germany ought to be relaxed, can be better imagined than described. There is no "Europe" that America can aid. The Europe that is broadcasting its regrets over American isolation is, with the honourable exception of the former neutral States, a collection of Governments each of which wants to get American money and American influence for itself, no matter what happens to the other. Some one has remarked that Mr. Wilson went to Paris bent upon carrying out some great and generous purposes; but that, once seated among the Allies, his whole attention was absorbed in guarding his watch and his pocketbook. If the essential spirit of the men who are arrogating to themselves the right to say what Europe shall be and do, and who have made so dismal a mess of the business, has radically changed since 1919, it is incumbent upon interventionists to make clear the nature of the change.

W. M. 26. ix. 23.

## A TOUCHSTONE FOR SOCIETY

"WHAT is really important in a country is the quality of life in it, and this far transcends its nominal political status or the names of its political institutions." This reflection by Mr. George W. Russell ("A. E."), in the first issue of the *Irish Statesman*, is so obvious as to be of the nature of a truism; it is almost as if Mr. Russell had declared that two and two make four; yet it is so rarely expressed that it must arrest the attention of even the casual reader.

How effectively the application of Mr. Russell's simple formula shatters the pretensions of the dwindling band of romanticists who maintain that certain vague blessings were derived from the war, with its thoroughgoing victory for the cause of "democracy"! In the various belligerent countries of Europe, with the possible exception of Russia, the quality of life has suffered a profound degradation. In great reaches of territory, especially in the vanquished countries, the major part of the population has been reduced to concentrating every effort on a brutalizing day-to-day struggle for food sufficient merely to keep alive. Under such circumstances it is a presumption to use the term "quality" in relation to life. In the so-called victorious countries one finds scarcely less evidence of prostration. Those who have any doubt whether England and France, as well as Germany, lost the war, can easily get rid of their optimism by glancing over the French press, or by subjecting themselves to the depressing experience of a visit to Hampstead Heath on a holiday.

Even in our country, virtually untouched by the hardships of war and remote even from the hardships of the peace, the quality of life has sharply declined. The great crusade left us in possession of a flourishing crop of prejudices and intolerances which have sadly undermined the general intelligence. The wartime propaganda of force to the uttermost has its natural aftermath in epidemics of violence, which in numerous instances have virtually wiped out orderly civil processes. As proof of this one has only to cite the recent clash between the Governor and the legislature in Oklahoma, the murderous attacks on striking railway-workers in Arkansas, the slaughter of strike-breakers at Herrin, Illinois, the outlawing of

members of the I. W. W. in California, and the various terroristic outbreaks of the Ku Klux Klan. Our political life has assumed the character of a conspiracy of deceptions, and the political brokers who angle for the higher offices bait their hooks almost exclusively with spurious issues and blatant insincerities.

Mr. Russell's dictum is an infallible test of the claims of self-styled patriots. We have a super-abundance of such gentry, many of them banded together in organizations devoted largely to atavistic self-admiration. One rarely finds the least evidence that such organizations are interested in improving the quality of life in the country to which they loudly profess devotion. Most of them seem to confuse patriotism with the service of privilege; some have degenerated into mere hate-mongers of the baser sort. It would be interesting if these organizations would strike a balance-sheet at the end of each year and try to show to what extent, if any, their several and combined efforts have improved, either spiritually or materially, the quality of American life. Our guess is that the balance would be fearfully slender.

We have in this country the natural resources and the material development with which to establish a quality of life, in so far as it can be affected by physical comfort and well-being, far above anything hitherto attained. Yet, though we have produced the finest machines in the world, in a spiritual sense our achievement is so meagre that peoples in lands wasted by starvation and confusion hold us but a stage removed from the barbarian. Certain it is that in our land *of* plenty the Idea has starved.

It may be that the very fact that ours is the highest attainment of material civilization under the established system condemns us to comparative spiritual sterility. A society wherein the agencies of life are most elaborately organized, not for the service of life, but for the aggrandizement of privilege, is scarcely likely to shake the world except with the thunder of its guns. In such a system creative intelligence is forced to be the mendicant of privilege, and thus it is denied that atmosphere of liberty in which alone it can find full play for its ambitions. A study of the list of trustees of our Eastern universities will indicate how closely cultural opportunity is shackled to privilege.

Under a system moulded to the pattern of the profiteer and the imperialist, political Government must inevitably degenerate into an organized hypocrisy. It can survive only so long as the political hierarchy is

able to delude the population with unrealities. Under Mr. Russell's touchstone, the base alloys of a society based on such a system are at once revealed. Though its vaults be bursting with treasure and its power extend to the most remote corners of the earth, it is shown for what it is, an unsubstantial thing; for what doth it profit a society to gain the whole world and lose its own soul?

To prophets of all kinds and conditions, to economists and to political aspirants of every shade, to conservative and reformer and revolutionist alike, we would apply Mr. Russell's inexorable formula as a common test. How, we would ask, do you propose to improve the quality of life? If the American people could hold their leaders and pretenders to this test, they would immediately be able to rid themselves of a great burden of demagogues, charlatans, tricksters and sentimental idiots, and would speedily clear the way for a real advance in civilization.

H. K. 7. xi. 23.

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## TOADSTOOLS

IN one of his earlier books Mark Twain tells of seeing a toadstool which in its growth had dislodged and pushed up into the air a mass of tangled roots and leaves, amounting to twice its own bulk. Commenting on this display of strength, he says: "Ten thousand toadstools with the right purchase could lift a man, I suppose. But what good would it do?"

There should be more of this strong common sense employed to make our estimate of our civilization less formal and more fundamental. One of the most striking differences between the Oriental mind and ours is seen here. The Oriental is struck with our way of regarding things and actions as good in themselves, without reference to individual and personal realization; and it seems strange and unnatural to him. Railways, banks, telephones, finance-companies, industrial development, newspapers—all such things are most commonly and generally accepted among us as absolute goods in themselves, quite irrespective of their effect upon the spirit of the individual life, and the quality of the collective life, which are lived under their influence. Let a new railway be laid out, or the postal service be increased, or some new device be invented for quickening

communication or transportation, and our general tendency is to accept it at once without question as a good thing, not considering that its whole value is to be measured by its effect upon the spirit and quality of life, and that until this effect be ascertained our estimate of it is worthless and misleading. Our newspapers teach us to take this formal and mechanical view of trade-balances and the expansion of industry, never raising the question whether these actually tend towards a better spirit and finer quality of human life or whether they tend towards a spiritual impoverishment and vulgarization; nor is it regularly pointed out that unless they are so employed as progressively to improve life, unless they are practically interpreted in terms of personal realization, they are hardly worth having.

Surely common sense and the free play of consciousness upon the facts of the material world about us are enough to show that this formal view, almost universal as it is, is superficial and retarding. We read the other day a complaint from a railway-official about new trackage. It seems that only a few miles of new trackage have been laid during the past year. He spoke of this as a calamity, as indeed it may be, but the mere fact does not prove itself as such. One must go further and ask whether it can be shown that individual realization has at all profited, and if so how much, by what trackage we already have. How does the spirit of American life compare, indeed, with the spirit of life at a period when there was no trackage at all? Again, we read not long ago a statement by the president of a great chemical concern, in which he predicted that science would possibly before long enable us to produce synthetic food, cheap fuel, artificial wool; to store solar heat, to do without sleep and to prolong mental and physical vigour. The tone of the statement left no doubt that this chemist regarded all these matters as absolute goods in themselves, whereas clearly they are nothing of the kind. If they are made to tend towards the enrichment and deepening of the spiritual life of man, they will be good; if they are made to tend against it, they will be bad; if they are made to tend neither way, they are of no consequence except in point of curiosity, like Mark Twain’s toadstool.

Again, we lately saw the advertisement of a life-extension institute, headed, “Do You Want to Add Ten Years to Your Life?” Here once more the obvious assumption was that longevity is in itself a good and desirable thing. But is it? There is of course in all of us the primary instinct of self-preservation which speaks out strongly in favour of living as long as we

can; and it is to this instinct, this irrational and almost bloodthirsty clinging to life, that the advertisement was intended to appeal. As such it seemed to us, we admit, a little ignoble; we were reminded, as all such enterprises which are now so much in vogue remind us, of Julius Cæsar's remark that life is not worth having at the expense of an ignoble solicitude about it. But instinct apart, the worth of such enterprises is measured, surely, by the quality of the life which we are invited to prolong. The content of the average life being what it is, and its prospects of spiritual enlargement and enrichment being what they are, may longevity be so indubitably regarded as an absolute good that one is justified in an almost ferocious effort to attain it?

We are not now concerned that these questions be answered; we are concerned only that they be raised. We are concerned with the habit, which seems to us unintelligent and vicious, of regarding potential accessories to civilization as essential elements in civilization. We insist that civilization is not to be measured in terms of longevity, trackage, the abundance of banks and newspapers, the speed and frequency of mails, and the like. Civilization is the progressive humanization of men in society, and all these things may or may not sustain a helpful relation to the process. At certain periods and places, indeed, the process has been carried notably further without any of them than it is now carried with all of them. When we learn to regard them intelligently, when we persuade ourselves that their benefit is potential and relative, not actual and absolute, then we are in the way of intelligently and quickly applying them to the furtherance of true civilization; but as long as we unintelligently regard them as absolute goods in themselves, we shall merely fumble with them.

A. J. N. 5. xii. 23.

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## IN BEHALF OF RELIGION

THERE is nothing new about the internal disturbance which is going on in certain of the Protestant churches, and which threatens two of them at least —the Presbyterian and Protestant Episcopal churches—with serious disruption. Ever since organized Christianity first ranged itself under a standard of intellectual belief and insisted upon identity of opinion as a

condition of fellowship, it has suffered from frequent outbreaks of this kind; and as long as it keeps to this general policy, so long they may be expected to recur.

They are salutary and should be welcomed. They are not good for the contending factions or for the ecclesiastical organization as a whole. Before the outbreak takes place, both factions have become quite ruffled; if either wins a substantial advantage over the other, it tends to become tyrannous; and thus their progress in religion is retarded. The organization emerges from the battle with its official notion of the importance of opinion thoroughly inflated; and thus its progress in religion is retarded too. But for those within the organization who do not concern themselves with the place and function of opinion in matters of religion—and these are doubtless a large majority—and for the far greater number of religious persons who remain outside organized Christianity altogether, these controversies are very valuable. They never yet have failed, when their dust and smoke have subsided, to make the essential nature of religion more clearly and easily visible, and to throw out in higher relief the figure of Jesus of Nazareth.

We shall have more to say on this subject as the situation in the churches develops. At present we make only an observation or two, leading up to a practical suggestion. As between the modernists and the fundamentalists, the preponderance of one's goodwill should be towards the former. Whether explicitly or implicitly, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, they are doing somewhat more than their adversaries for the clearance and disengagement of religion. Religion is a *temper*, a frame of mind; the fruit of the Spirit is, as St. Paul says, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. It is probably not to be said that the modernists exhibit this temper in the present controversy more distinctly than their opponents; yet the terms of their contention are more favourable to the general apprehension of religion as a *temper* than the terms chosen by the fundamentalists. As in strictness between the two, therefore, the mind that is interested purely in the furtherance of religion would incline to the side of the modernists.

But it is not necessary to take sides in this controversy, nor is it appropriate to do so; because, as has invariably been the case, neither side has, from the point of view of religion itself, a sound cause. The proper attitude is that of Erasmus towards the early rivalries between Romanism

and Protestantism. Erasmus saw that as far as religion is concerned, Protestantism rested on no more solid intellectual foundation than Romanism, and that the questions controverted between the two were therefore really negligible. Hence he refrained from partisanship and contented himself with continually pointing out that religion, properly speaking, was not involved in the discussion; that it was implicit neither in the dogmatic tenets of Romanism nor in those of Protestantism, but was a *tertium quid* not directly contemplated by either. His attitude was that which was taken on another occasion by St. Paul in reference to the great ecclesiastical controversy of his day, when he said that "in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything; nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." In the present controversy in the Protestant Episcopal church, the thing is, therefore, not to take one's stand with the reactionary bishops who say that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth must be believed; nor yet with the modernists who content themselves with saying that disbelief in that dogma is permissible within the doctrinal system of this branch of the church. The thing is to insist that this dogma, whatever it may represent as matter of fact, and whatever its status in any doctrinal system may be, has nevertheless no conceivable connexion with religion. It belongs in an entirely different order of truth. The truth of parthenogenesis, whatever that truth may be, is truth of science; it is not truth of religion; and from the standpoint of religion, it is utterly irrelevant and nugatory to dispute against it or to dispute for it or to concern oneself with it in any way except as matter of strict science.

Our practical suggestion to the modernists is that they should make their service to religion distinct, direct and positive instead, as now, of making it confused, indirect and negative. We would remind them that in all previous controversies men have appeared who laboured to put the controverted dogmas on their proper ground by discriminating sharply and powerfully between truth of science and truth of religion, and by showing, as one of the greatest of these apologists puts it, that "truth of science does not become truth of religion until it is made religious"—until, that is, it is informed and animated by the *temper* which is religion. Such were the Cambridge Platonists, Hales, to some extent Tillotson and Stillingfleet, and above all Jeremy Taylor, in the seventeenth century; such were Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold in the nineteenth. What is needed now is a new apologetic

which shall do for this generation in behalf of religion and of organized Christianity what Matthew Arnold did for the last; and shall do in behalf of the life, words and character of Jesus what was done by Renan. If our newer modernism will produce this apologetic, it will have done something positive and fruitful in the cause of religion, beside which its present efforts in the cause of a dubious and unimportant broad-church ecclesiasticism will appear of no great consequence.

A. J. N. 2. i. 24.

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# MISCELLANY

THE effect of Brieux's play, "La Robe Rouge," done in New York under the title "The Letter of the Law," was to make me once more try to analyze the vague dissatisfaction and irritation that one feels against the propagandist and all his works and ways. The play is a first-rate sample of Brieux's quality, and as such it is exceedingly good. Yet one left it with hardly any feeling except relief that it was over. Its purpose is to show that the law is not an instrument of justice; well, that is easily done, for a moment's reflection will convince anyone that nobody ever goes to law with any view of justice. He goes for gain or for revenge, and gain or revenge are all that the law-courts are equipped to give him. Mr. Howells made this clear to the English-reading public, years ago, in a passage that no one, once reading it, can forget; and if that were not enough, the court-scene in "Resurrection" presents the same truth with all the skill and power of a master's hand.

Count Tolstoy, too, was a most distinguished propagandist; but not primarily. He was first of all an artist, a literary artist, and never got over the artist's trick of observation, of composing "with the eye on the subject." He was a first-class reporter of what he saw, and he saw nearly everything in sight. Brieux is a first-class reporter of what goes on inside his own head. Hence Tolstoy's court-scene gives a slice out of life, with all life's trivialities and inconsistencies and infinite variety of colour. Brieux's play presents one solid colour, and that colour is drab—and life is not like that. His purposefulness is incessant, hard, dogged, driving and inflexible; he pursues his characters along their appointed pathways with a relentless insistence amounting almost to savagery, never letting them look to the right or left—and life is not at all like that. Thus it is, I think, that one cannot take much interest in his people or be very sorry for them, or become over-much moralized by their fate. I came away thinking of Cervantes, Turgeniev, Rabelais, Dickens, Artemus Ward, Mr. Dooley—an oddly assorted run of names, yet strung together on a real thread of association. Their passage before my mind convinced me that the effective propagandist is the incidental one, and that to be such he must remain always primarily the observant artist and the imperturbable critic of art, the critic, above all, of his own art.

A. J. N. 17. iii. 20.

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HERE is an interesting turn of human nature. Grandi, a carpenter, elected recently to the Italian Parliament as a revolutionary Socialist, went into the Chamber the day before the opening session, to have a look round and see what it was like. Workmen were erecting the throne and canopy for the King, who was to be present next day and preside at the opening of Parliament. Grandi watched the proceedings for a while with the trained eye of a carpenter, and then stepped forward and told the workmen that the canopy was not safe, that it might come tumbling down on the King's head, and kill him; and then, without more ado, he took the job in hand himself and superintended it through to a safe and shipshape end. As a revolutionary Socialist, he was all for overthrowing the monarchy; but as a carpenter, he was against botchwork, even to get rid of a king. Human nature, left to itself, has an inveterate instinct for playing the game by the rules.

F. N. 24. iii. 20.

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WHO will begin to comb and collate the material that will serve the scholars of 2020 A. D. who will write the cultural history of America? If we were as truly solicitous of our duty to posterity as we sometimes assert when anxious to justify acts that are really for the benefit of our own day, we would organize the data so as to report ourselves aright to the coming generations and to the civilizations that will succeed ours. We can save much effort for the student a century hence and obviate misconception and misinterpretation by preserving the documents and evidence which, otherwise, might be available only in such fragments as give rise to fruitless controversies. Much of our scattered literature in the periodical field, our unco-ordinated efforts to root the arts in the life of the people, our informal extension of popular education—other topics will spring to the reader's mind—might be recorded and charted so as to present to-day in true perspective to the morrow. In some respects the future historian's labours are being simplified by the publication of volumes that assess contemporary strivings and achievement in the arts and sciences, in religious and institutional life. But how, other than by patient gathering of what crumbs

remain of our newspapers, catalogues and programmes, will the Schliemanns of the twenty-first century identify, corroborate and classify the countless abortive enterprises—the marginal sketches for culture—that precede and illuminate the finished achievement? “The Encyclopædia Britannica” bravely promised annual supplements to its eleventh edition, but only one volume, that for 1913, appeared. The Nelson “Encyclopædia” keeps abreast of life by means of loose leaves. Such works deal with accomplished facts rather than with experiments, and what they record is less interesting than what they omit. Though it is conceded that State activities calculated to assist the scientist, the merchant, the farmer and others will result in valuable heritage, besides paying their way to-day, the present archives alone will not afford a perfect cross-section of our intellectual life.

Why should we not have an official bureau of cultural research to discover, record, interpret and preserve the isolated endeavours of men and women, who, prompted by different ideals and motives, are contributing footnotes to what one day will evolve as an American culture? One need but examine one’s shelves, the daily post, the casual newspaper, to be impressed by the wealth of significant material, trivial when considered item by item, but of real value in its cumulation. What of the effect on our literary taste of the publications of Thomas B. Mosher during twenty-five years? How has our thinking been moulded by chautauquas, lyceums, open forums and teachers’ institutes? Should there not be a record, other than that in the dry index of newspapers, of the influence wielded by the *Chap Book*, the *Seven Arts*, and by personal journalism: consider Brann’s *Iconoclast;* William Marion Reedy’s *Mirror;* Elbert Hubbard’s *Philistine* and even Samuel E. Asbury’s *Nativist*, published at five cents at College Station, Texas? Everywhere there are competitions for the best stories, paintings, musical compositions; travelling exhibitions that aim to unite the country in a common love of the beautiful. Last autumn it remained for a Chicago department-store to make the most comprehensive display of American books ever seen outside of a public library, and under such conditions, and with such publicity, as no library could possibly supply. There is something alluring about the thought of registering the many apparently unrelated adventures in culture and pseudo-culture with a view to a more precise presentation of our era than we are able to obtain of the past.

B. W. H. 24. iii. 20.

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I HAVE been standing before Rodin's "Hand of God," that marvellous portrayal of the first embrace, the primeval kiss, as God, in a moment of joy, tenderly created man and woman. The love which animates the beautiful hand infuses warmth and impulse into the entwined figures breaking into shape from the formless clay. The uncontracted knuckles, the deep shadows lying between the second and third fingers, the third finger lying over the point of the fourth, indicate easy and tender restraint. All the action is in the finger-tips, and all the power, the directing force, is in the thumb which supports the man's thigh and upper leg, as they rest in the winding arm of the woman—the man's head falling upon her bosom, and her face pressed down close to his. The figures come from the hand of the Creator, entwined like the petals of an unfolding flower. Wonderfully, indeed, does the piece proclaim the eternal truth that men and women leave the hand of God as free creatures blessed with love; and with love in our own eyes, we can discern the love in the artist's soul.

F. N. 31. iii. 20.

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Is there not something significant about the fact that censorship of books and plays, as practised in English-speaking countries, had its origin in the king's fool? The office of master of the revels evolved from the function of the jester, and, under Elizabeth, this master became the dramatic censor. Finally, the abuses that arose prompted the demand for statutory regulation. Early in the eighteenth century Lord Chesterfield said, "If the players are to be punished, let it be by the laws of their country, and not by the will of an irresponsible despot." Since that time, in England, plays require a license from the lord chamberlain or, at least, a play may not be produced if that person makes objection within seven days of the submission of a manuscript. The vagaries of the modern English censorship are illustrated by the banning of such plays as Oscar Wilde's "Salome" and Maeterlinck's "Monna Vanna," on the one hand, and Gilbert and Sullivan's "Mikado" on the other. Laurence Housman, well-known to *Freeman* readers, some ten years ago wrote a play dealing with George IV, which was accorded the

honour of being forbidden. There is no record of plays about George V., but newspaper readers may remember that the British Government found other means than the lord chamberlain's office in dealing with fiction by one Mylius, regarding that monarch. In America we are not even abreast of the England of 1545, for we still piously refuse to concede the existence of a censorship, while we cheerfully submit to the unregulated exercise and abuse of the power that accompanies it. The jester of 1545 functions to-day in these United States as a police lieutenant or a post-office inspector.

B. W. H. 28. vii. 20.

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CYNICAL observers who profess to be puzzled at what form of compensation the frustrated impulse towards the drinking of strong liquor will take might profitably study the actions of the crowd at a baseball game. The "fans" follow the game with more intensity than of yore—in fact on a holiday afternoon, when the score is close, the proceedings at the Polo grounds have many of the emotional aspects of a lynching-party. If the umpire makes a glaring mistake or unfair decision not favouring the local team, he runs a good chance of having a soda-water bottle bounced off his head by some irate member of the assembled citizenry. I counted fifteen such shining missiles last Saturday when the umpire called Mr. Pipp out, when it was shockingly clear to at least 20,000 of the 38,000 present that he was safe. Three or four such decisions in a row, and an umpire courts violence.

Similar in its impulse, like the old thumbs-down of the Roman amphitheatre, is the aggressive booing of the opposing pitcher when he shows signs of weakening. Let him throw three "balls" without a single strike, and an hysterically monotonous hand-clapping will begin throughout the grandstand. "Take him out," "Tie a can to him," "You tell 'em, ocean, he hasn't got the sand," and similar pleasantries are shrieked by the sportsmen. There is usually applause for some particularly well-executed play by the opposing team, but it is perfunctory compared with the screams of joy when a member of the local team scurries over the plate. Let the redoubtable Babe knock a home run, as seems to be his daily habit of late, and scores of brand-new straw hats come whirling down through the air to the field, flung

by the excited business men who can find no other way to vent their emotions.

Baseball is more than any other sport the one fitted to be popular in America, for it is a game where at any moment, from first to last, something may happen; the situation is always tense—it is never like those last two despairing minutes before time in a football game when the other team has one touchdown to the good and the ball is on your own twenty yard line. "The game isn't over," as some sapient fan will be sure to say at least once a day, "until the last man is out." That is one reason Americans like it. But the other, and perhaps the deeper, is that the ballpark is the one place left in our civilization where a man is permitted "jocundly and with fulness of freedom," as Rabelais says, to make a fool of himself in public. It is almost as satisfying as a lynching-party, and on the whole, considerably safer.

H. ST. 4. viii. 20.

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MIDDLE-AGED students of the high cost of living must sometimes think longingly of the good old days of the free-lunch counter; when for a few cents and a trifle of cheek one could enjoy a hearty meal in any first-class hotel on Broadway. In those happy days the sybarite could get on in fashionable places on fifty cents a day for food no matter where he might be roomed; whether in a hall-bedroom at $2.50 per week, or on a high scale of magnificence in a front or back bedroom, "with or without," in a boarding house within the confines of Respectabilia which bordered the old Tenderloin. He could saunter into the Vendome or the St. James or the old Fifth Avenue, and do himself very well indeed on a glass of beer, a cocktail, or a milk-and-seltzer. He could seat himself at a table, beckon to a real waiter, call for his drink, and ask for a few samples of "the viands you have spread out over there," and the real waiter would grant his request with something more than union alacrity, and for a tip of a nickel return him a gracious smile. The dear old days! gone, never to return. Yes, life was worth living then, and people really lived. Once for $1.50—think of it!—five persons, four of them hungry, sat at a table in the Hoffman House, and enjoyed each a drink and a square meal, and the waiter was most affable throughout. Indeed on parting he urged them pleasantly to come again.

What is civilization, when you have to pay at a place of most moderate distinction at least a quarter for a baked apple, and ten cents extra for a spoonful of cream—and withal no smile from the waitress? How absurd to enter into a discussion of food-values and the dietetic qualities of the apple. Life is not wholly expressed in calories; at least congenial life is not. Calories connote the *porte-malheur*, the prohibitionist, Mr. Palmer, martial law and other such dampers of the jocund spirit.

But there is more to it than this; for with the passing of the free-lunch counter there is gone the clever debonair race of men who were particular about the places where they ate and the way their food was served. Almost any day of the week might be found between the hours of eleven and one, in the bar-rooms of Broadway's big hotels, a sprinkling of men connected with the drama, literature, journalism and art who were always ready to crack a joke and take a drink, with whatever might go with both; generous souls who spent it when they had it, but whether they had it to spend or no, loved life and lived it for its own sake. Where are they now, those warm-hearted fellows who looked so debonair on meagre wardrobes—many of them at times the matinée idols of a vanished race of women who would have scoffed at the movies, preferring flesh to film? What names must come to the mind of the man of middle life who knew his Broadway well, say, twenty-five or thirty years ago!

In those days the man of business, the scientist, the doctor and lawyer would be found in the company of artists, glad to be in close touch with them and to dispense their quips and sallies to an ever widening circle. On one occasion I recall four well-known dramatic critics and a famous inventor together at the bar of the St. James Hotel, sampling the liquor and free-lunch trimmings with all the gusto of connoisseurs. What raconteurs they were! the things they talked about, the subjects they were familiar with, the celebrities they had met, amazed the stranger and delighted the heart of the hero-worshipper. One of them had met Ibsen face to face; another knew Anatole France; another had shaken Verdi by the hand; and Albert S. was in Venice when Wagner died and went on to Bayreuth with the body.

It sounds like a saga now to speak of those men who gathered round the free-lunch bar in the good old days of thirty years ago. Who meets anybody now? Still, Government must have something to do even if it be but to

make austere consideration of our health and morals—not that there were lacking people in that day who would have us wiser but sadder men. The middle-aged must remember how Broadway was affected by Dr. Parkhurst and the Raines-law sandwich, that dusty, fly-specked legal tender that forced a man to eat when he only wanted a drink. One thinks of the famous cardboard sandwich that Charlie J., the artist, carried about with him for months. He made it himself and painted it himself, and wherever he produced it, the house felt secure that the law was not infringed. Was it not as honest and more humorous to carry a counterfeit sandwich in your breast-pocket than to carry a loaded flask on your hip? Who can impeach the morality of the old days? Has the contraband flask so wonderfully improved and regenerated our social life and manners, elevated our companionships and purged the dross out of our ethics? *Si quaris, cricumspice*.

F. N. 15. ix. 20.

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ONE of the kindliest souls that ever tapped a conductor's desk was Louis Saar, who for years was with the Metropolitan and Covent Garden. I never heard of an opera that he did not know. When some high-priced tenor or coloratura soprano importuned for the revival of some ancient work which had faded out of memory, Maurice Grau and Sir Augustus Harris went straightway to Saar, and his knowledge never failed them. He was a walking encyclopædia of music. New works sent in for consideration were passed on to him as a matter of routine. I remember spending an afternoon with him, going over the score of Paderewski's "Manru," when it was just out. Saar was also the factotum, the handy man, about the stage. He looked after the stage band; he accompanied artists who were preparing or rehearsing parts; he gave the cues for light-effects, for the operation of mechanical appliances, for changes in scenery, and for the numberless other effects that must be kept in time and harmony with the orchestra. And all the time he did his work with precision and cheerfulness far into a long life.

One day, at a trial of young singers, he sat quite alone at the back of the house. A buxom woman of great size, recommended by a friend of Grau, had sung the "Caro Nome," and Grau, evidently in a quandary as to what to say to her, walked back to where Saar was sitting, and asked, "How about

it, Saar?" The old gentleman, unable to suppress his laughter, put his hand up to his mouth and said in a whisper that could be heard all over the house —one of the few things he could not do was to whisper—"She vill fill de stage if her voice does not fill de house." Then he added, quickly, "But it iss a nice voice for a small concert-room." Grau turned to me and said, "I'd rather see him smile than hear her sing." Indeed, it was worth something to see a smile playing over his sensitive and mobile lips; his massive head, his grey beard, bushy brows and beaming eyes, always reminded me of Michelangelo's marbles of the patriarchs.

It was no easy task to win the respect and admiration of choruses in those days, at least, but Saar did it. At Covent Garden there were the German, French, Belgian and English choruses, each having its own opinion of the others and no great hesitation or reluctance about expressing it; but they were of one mind about Saar. He did so many kindly things, not only in the easy way of lending money or showing the little favours that mean so much to the folk connected with the stage, but such as are prompted by a deep and kindly understanding. "It vill make dem happy," he said, as he asked on one occasion for a better arrangement of dressing-rooms, "I like to see dem all comfortable."

His first appearance in the "Meistersinger" was sensational. It was his duty to see the stage-band seated in the pavilion for the last scene; which was simple enough, for the old stage at Covent Garden did not permit the change between the first and second scenes of the third act to be made without dropping the curtain. After the curtain fell, Saar always walked into the centre of the stage, where he could see the band and give the cue for coming in with the orchestra; and when he did this, he was in street dress, ready to go home, as this was his last duty of the evening. Lohse, who was conducting, was known not to be above having a bit of fun out of a practical joke; but whether by chance or plan, this night the curtain was rung up before Saar had a chance to get off the stage: there he stood in the centre with his back to the audience, a big silk hat pulled down on the back of his head, a huge umbrella under his arm—a figure far more comic than any Beckmesser. A moment or so elapsed before he became aware of the situation; then the roar of laughter that burst from the audience startled him out of his wits, and with one frightened glance around, he bounded off the stage. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, was present at the

performance and enjoyed Saar's exit so much that he sent word to have it repeated whenever he came to hear the "Meistersinger."

Under the conditions prevailing before the Covent Garden stage was rebuilt, it was a heartbreaking job to get through a performance without tumbling the scenery over or doing something equally disconcerting. Saar distinguished himself again, in the third act of the "Valkyrie." The machinery used for the ride of the valkyries was the old-fashioned switchback railway. Papier-mâché horses were mounted on trucks, and on the backs of these steeds, ballet-girls were rushed across the stage through pieces of scenery which did duty for clouds. The device was supposed to be timed so that at the centre of the stage each horse and rider was lighted up by a flash of lightning; but in spite of all the stage-machinists could do, the thing never went right. When the flash came, the horse and the ballet-girl were not in it. This was convenient for the critics, because they could write the notices in advance. It got on Saar's nerves; and at the beginning of the season he said to me, "My tear, I vill told you—dis time you see de ride of de valkyrie. I vill do it right. All I do is to tell Stanford and his men just before de act a few vords." When the scene was set, I went behind and found him talking to Stanford, the chief machinist, and his men.

"Now, pay attention to vat I say," he began, "Here, on dis side, is de horses; de railvay runs across de stage. You, at dis horse," (picking a man) "you, at dat horse," (picking another and so on). "I go to ze oder side of de stage and stand vere you can see me. Right across, dere vill be a liddle light on me so you see vat I do. Now vatch. I know de music ven de horses should leave, and I take my handkerchief so" (holding his open handkerchief by one corner). "Ven de cue comes in de music, I lift it up and shake it vonce—so! Den you push de first horse, and, it vill be in time for de lightning. Ven de next von comes, I lift my hand and vave my handkerchief—so! Den you push de next horse and it vill be in time for de lightning." A broad smile came over his face, and giving us all a sanguine glance, he put his handkerchief back in his pocket and said, "Dat is all."

The music began and the curtain rose. But, alas, in the Covent Garden of that day, a change of scene meant dust, dust in clouds. Saar took up his vantage-point, the men were watching closely, each ready to push his horse when the signal was given. Suddenly Saar let forth a tremendous sneeze and raised his handkerchief to his nose several bars before the cue. Bang! came

the first horse across the stage. Saar was overcome by rage and amazement, shook his handkerchief violently across the stage, and bang! came the second horse, then another and another, until they were all across before the first one should have started. Saar lost his head and shouted, “Send dem back!” Back they went—and met the lightning-flash at the centre of the stage while they were flying across tail foremost. No audience in the world, probably, ever laughed as that one did. Poor Saar!—how everyone chaffed him, and how good-natured and apologetic he was through it all! One night some time afterwards he came to me and said, “My tear, it is de ‘Valkyrie’ to-morrow night. I will not interfere. Only vonce in my life I insult Votan by sending his daughters to him in heaven vith de rump of de horses galloping first.”.

F. N. 22. ix. 20.

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IN his amazing autobiography “Steeplejack” Mr. Huneker tells a story of a corn-cutter at Bayreuth who, when questioned by the redoubtable and curious James as to what kind of a looking man Wagner was, replied that he was a little bow-legged Jew who always wore a long cloak to hide his crooked legs. This reminds me of another story that once upon a time I picked up in Bayreuth. An old tanner who knew Seidl when he was associated with Wagner told me that the master was not a Jew but that he had all the musical genius of the race. Seidl did not think that Wagner was a Jew, but that doesn’t prove very much. Wagner was a revolutionist and that fact may explain why so many people have held to what I may perhaps call the Hunekerian theory of race in connexion with music. The Jews have certainly provided the world with many of its greatest revolutionists. Indeed the race has provided pretty nearly every department of life with an outstanding genius. The old German who said “Ach God, the Jews must be a great people to have given us Moses, Jesus and Offenbach” seems to me to clinch the matter.

Seidl was always very fond of telling stories about Wagner. One I remember may be worth telling here. On one occasion Wagner and Seidl were waiting for a train at Bayreuth station. It was a wet and stormy day and they were cooped up in the waiting room. But Wagner was very happy telling jokes and every now and then stopping to chat with the townsfolk.

Suddenly he stopped before an old woman seated on a bench, and his eye fell upon a market basket on the floor before her. Seidl noticed that the lid of the basket was moved spasmodically every now and then as if it contained some living thing that was trying to get out. Wagner bent down, looked the woman in the face and asked humorously, “Who is the gentleman you have in the basket?” He thought it might be a rabbit or a fowl, as he told Seidl afterwards. The woman, knowing him, entered into the humour of his mood and playfully jumped the lid off the basket and revealed a live fish lying on some hay. In a moment Wagner was furious with anger. “Bring me a knife, bring me a knife,” he cried, and Seidl, producing a pocket knife, stood by and watched Wagner kill the fish. He threw it back in the basket, stamped his foot and shouted, “Oh, you terrible, cruel woman.” The woman after her first astonishment was very much upset and cried bitterly, but after a while when Wagner had regained his composure he soothed her and gave her some money to pay for the fish.

F. N. 20. x. 20.

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BEING fond of cultivated beauty, I find the South County of Rhode Island —the stretch between Westerly and Wickford—quite the loveliest sight that the country can furnish; or, no, strictly speaking, my allegiance wavers between that and the county of Sussex, in New Jersey. When I am in either, I am heart and soul for it, but always philandering with memories of the other. Both show the marks of having long been lived in by a comfortably sparse but settled population. The county of Sussex somewhat reminds one of the Auvergne, whose wheatfields were tilled to the hill-tops in Julius Cæsar’s time, and no one knows how much before. The South County also is hilly and rolling ground, and its careful cultivation gives it the air of solvency which to me means much in a landscape. It has no hypochondriac’s climate. Its seasons are sharply marked, and each one conscientiously fills out its annual engagement, giving you the worth of your money at any time of year; and the air is soft and heavy. Mr. Thomas Robinson Hazard maintains that the South County was the ancient Atlantis, the abode of the gods, and that their food, known as Ambrosia, was merely the meal of Rhode Island white corn, ground *secundum artem* between millstones fashioned from rock of a peculiar grain and fineness which he

calls Narragansett granite. Mr. Hazard's mythology may be fanciful, but when in South County one really does not see anything unreasonable in attributing to the gods at least as good taste and good judgment as one attributes to oneself.

Distinction!—that is the great thing; and the South County has it. Distinction is the product of years, of abundant and worthy history, of tradition, and of a certain segregation of interest. Localities take on a character from all these, a character that is immediately perceived by anyone who is sensitive to such impressions, and that above all else recommends them. There is wonderful natural beauty throughout the country and those of us who are content with that can be abundantly satisfied. Those who, like myself, are most of all interested in the evidence of human co-operation with nature, and most deeply affected by seeing that man has been at it a long time and has made a good job of his share, do not fare so well. Sir Joshua Reynolds looked long at a painting: "Yes," he said, "perspective right, drawing right, colour right, everything right—but, hang it, man," he added, snapping his fingers, "hang it, man, it wants *that!"* And the *that* is precisely what is missed out of so much of our natural sightliness —it lacks *distinction*, it carries on its face the expression of a big, stupid, beautiful blonde, lovely to glance at and pass on from, with never a turn of the head. The abode, for a decade or so, of undistinguished men, following out undistinguished interests—standardized, unindividual, conforming men, untouched by tradition or by any sense of history—may show everything done for it that nature can do, and technical art as well, but it wants distinction, it wants *that!* The people of the South County are still in the main—not wholly, it is no Eden—in the main, children of the covenant, individualists, as respectful of the prerogatives of others as they are jealous of their own, immensely independent, reflective, shrewd, kindly, dignified. Thus the fine original tradition of Rhode Island still marks the face of the South County and its invigorating flavour permeates the air.

The South County is one of the few regions of the country that has distinctive food. Bret Harte noted, without being aware of it, the first, perhaps, of the dismal processes of standardization which have sapped American life of so much interest, when he remarked that one could traverse the land from end to end and not find a local dish; that the country inns were but a weak reflex of the metropolitan hotels. In one or two

districts, a local kitchen still survives after a fashion; and the South County has kept to its tradition rather better than any, as far as I have observed. Mr. Hazard has filled a great many pages of his book with ample descriptions of the South County diet of half or three-quarters of a century ago, and one would no more have the temerity to take up the subject after him than one would undertake to write an epic poem after reading Homer! Alas! change, inevitable and unwelcome change, has set in on the South County's standard of living. The South County is not of the world, but it is in the world, worse luck!—and if not beaten by the billows, it feels the ground-swell. It has lost less, however, than the rest of us. South County corn, rye, apples, ducks, turkeys, fish, shell-fish, are still the best of their kind and the South County has still, thank fortune, respect enough for them to treat them decently; cookery still survives there as an honoured art, and there is ground for hope that as such it may overlive even the iconoclasm of this generation.

Food-products of the South County, however, do not very well bear eating away from home. Jonny-cakes, for instance, baked in New York out of South County meal by a South County cook, in the established and regular South County mode, lose something. They are still the best in the world, but not by the same magnificent margin of superiority. This is true of Kingston sausage and many other things. I have always thought that Horace's *cœlum non animam mutant* has, and was intended to have, only a special and restricted application, even to human beings. Normality, or normalcy if you like, is one thing here and another there, differing subtly by many imponderables. Perhaps this is the secret of the local dish, of the well-known vagaries of tobacco, and other curious matters. Italian friends once told me that real *grissini* could be made only in Genoa, and that a painstaking effort to reproduce their peculiar quality had been made at Turin, no great way from Genoa, and had failed. Another friend brought English tobacco home with him in air-tight tins, but found, so he said, that it tasted like ravelled rope. Some say that all this is imagination, others say that a multitude of slight and indeterminable changes take place in the chemistry of the substance, and again others say—which I think more likely—that the changes are in the chemistry of the percipient's body.

A. J. N. 27. x. 20.

MR. JAMES HUNEKER little knows what a flood of memories of old New York his volume “Steeplejack” has let loose, in my mind; nor does he know, and I do not either, where they will run to. He starts me thinking first of all about those old haunts that lay between Eighth Street and Madison Square. Once again I am popping in and out of restaurants and hotels where so many of the old friends he mentions were to be seen; once again I go marching up the stairs of the *Musical Courier* office in Union Square hoping to find there James Huneker himself. What days those were! I can still see Jim Hill sauntering between the old Coleman House and the Union Square Theatre, his splendid Dundrearys floating in the breeze. And Billy Crane, always alert, happy and dapper, saluting all and sundry as he passed on his way to the Star Theatre where “The Senator” was having a wonderful run. What stories those stones at the corner of Fourteenth Street could tell. It was there Henry Irving’s wonderful hat was carried off by a sudden gust of wind into the Square. For a moment the discomfited tragedian looked like Lear with his white hair,

> Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
> Catch in their fury, and make nothing of.

But Sir Henry was never the man to run after his hat. He stood his ground firmly, and presently a hack-driver brought it back to him.

I am often puzzled when I think what the unhappy historian will say ten or fifteen years hence when he applies himself to the task of telling the next generation something about New York of the ’eighties. There won’t be a vestige of it left standing. The house-breakers are always at work. Where alas! is old Tony Pastor’s, the Academy of Music, and old Tammany Hall? Tony Pastor was a significant figure in the life of old New York, and so was Ned Gilmore. And what a wonderful place in those spacious days was Lüchow’s. Think of the folk who came to eat at his tables! And Lüchow himself. Why, he ought to be as famous to his generation as, say, Louis Eustace Ude was to his. How blurred our memories are becoming in these modern times.

Am I all wrong about Union Square in the old days? Is it merely the fantasy of one who years ago came to the city filled with the spirit of romance and merely glorified the tawdry events of a tawdry period. Surely that is not the case. Union Square was a centre—we have no such centres

now in our modern city. There was the old Café Hungaria. One never-to-be-forgotten Sunday night, in the rooms at the top of the building, three of the world's greatest pianists took turns at the Steinway. On another occasion, I remember in the Café downstairs a great company, with Catenhausen and Lilli Lehmann, feasted and talked of composers and singers who are seldom mentioned nowadays. Then there was Brubacher's where the Rhine wine was of the best; a place where every one talked of music, music, music and nothing but music. In those far-off days, dear old Ernest Catenhausen had an apartment on Irving Place. I remember one Sunday afternoon seeing Lilli Lehmann turn majestically out into Gramercy Park just as the old gentleman was leaving the stoop. What a greeting passed between them—the old style greeting.

But everything is scattered now. The times are out of joint. There are no coteries, no rendezvous. We are all merely acquaintances of one another. Where is that old camaraderie, that old intimacy which we used to enjoy so freely and so happily. That room upstairs at Fleischmann's was once the most famous rendezvous in the world. We have nothing like it in New York or in any of our cities to-day. I lived in Ninth Street in those days, and Martin's restaurant in University Place was at its hey-day. Mary Siddons and Harry Waller and I, when we were in funds, would go there to lunch or dine and enjoy as good cooking as even Paris could provide. Martin's was a great place at the beginning of the opera season. Victor Maurel and Jean and Edouard de Reszke (in their early days) were often there. What bustle and excitement there was when the singers arrived from Europe. On Sunday night there was a party of about a dozen lions dining there—the de Reszkes, Seidl, Rosenthal, Henry Irving, Mary Siddons and Dvorak, all as happy as boys and girls at a clam-bake. Thank God, the old building still stands—but not for long I fear.

What has come over us in this city during these thirty years? We all seem to be under such restraint, nowadays. We all seem to be hedged in, afraid to let ourselves go. Is it because we have so few opportunities for meeting and understanding one another? Of course, it is true that as one grows older one is inclined to glorify "the good old days," and overlook what is best in the present. But I would like to ask my older readers whether they feel that there is really the same frankness and friendship in the life of to-day? Enthusiasm seems to have cooled. Perhaps, the upheaval caused by

the war and its outcome has done much to sour our dispositions and to make us all cynical. Whatever it may be, something has been withdrawn from life that was very delightful while it lasted.

F. N. 3. xi. 20.

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I WONDER if the Irish Free State will set up a monument to or even write the epitaph of James Fintan Lalor. Probably it will not. Now that the class that Lalor strove to liberate—the Irish farmers—have become peasant proprietors, a reminder of Lalor's doctrine might not be at all welcome, and yet of the Evangelists of Irish revolution—Padraic Pearse named them as Wolfe Tone, John Mitchel, Thomas Davis and Fintan Lalor—Lalor is the one whose speech still lives. He saw what Davitt and Parnell were led to see—that the Irish legislative question could never be forced to a solution until it became linked to something that had actual driving power. It was he who discovered the engine that Parnell and Davitt were to use, the engine of agrarian revolution. "An engine ready-made too," wrote Lalor, "one too that will generate its own steam without cost or care—a self-acting engine, if once the fire be kindled, and the fuel to kindle—the sparks for the kindling are everywhere. . . . This I speak of will carry itself, as the cannon-ball carries itself down the hill."

Lalor prophesied an agrarian revolution, not only for Ireland but for every civilized country. He wrote for Ireland of the 'forties but he knew that secret agencies would bear his words to other lands. "I hold and maintain that the entire soil of a country belongs of rights to the entire people of that country, and is the rightful property, not of any one class, but of the nation at large, in full effective possession, to let to whom they will on whatever tenures, terms, rents, services and conditions they will; one condition, however, being unavoidable and essential, the condition that the tenant shall bear full, true and undivided fealty and allegiance to the nation, and the laws of the nation, whose lands he holds, and own no allegiance to any other prince, power, or people. . . . I hold further and firmly believe that the enjoyment by the people of this right of first ownership in the soil is essential to the vigour and vitality of all other rights; to their validity, efficiency and value, to their secure possession and safe exercise."

There are some writers whose statements are so significant and so simple that their proper literary form is the aphorism. James Fintan Lalor was such a writer. Circumstance often prevents a man from getting to his own proper expression and Lalor had such circumstance against him. The aphorism corresponds to the whisper, and Lalor had to shout. He saw the old Celtic people being swept out of their own country; it was necessary to shout out the excellent plan he had for their salvation. Therefore he wrote editorials in *The Irish Felon* and letters to various persons and various organizations. His statements too often are rhetorical. But again and again one finds sentences that show that Lalor was properly a maker of aphorisms, of maxims, of watchwords. The one sentence of his that is really remembered in Ireland is such an aphorism: “Not the constitution that Wolfe Tone died to abolish, but the constitution Tone died to obtain—independence.” One might glean from his writings certain aphorisms that should have a place in a Revolutionist’s Handbook: “Every question is little until some one makes it great.” “It is easier to convince a million men than a single man.” “It is never the mass of the people that forms its real and efficient strength—it is the men by whom the mass is moved and managed.” “Wisdom knows that in national action littleness is more fatal than the wildest rashness.”

What made Fintan Lalor an important—perhaps the most important—Irish revolutionist was that he was able to perceive a weak place in the English domination of Ireland, and that he was able to direct the whole power of his intellectual being to striking at that place. There were eight thousand landowners in Ireland made up of the descendants of the conquerors or of renegades from the native race. If the tenant-farmers of Ireland refused to pay rent to them England would have to abandon them or send her armies to snatch the Irish harvests. The struggle with the landlords would generate power for a further struggle. “I see clearly,” Lalor wrote “that the reconquest of our liberties would be incomplete and worthless without a reconquest of our lands—would not necessarily involve or produce that of our lands, and could not, on its own means, be possibly achieved; while the reconquest of our lands would involve the other—would at least be complete in itself, and adequate to its own purposes; and could possibly, if not easily, be achieved. . . . I selected as the mode of reconquest to refuse payment of rent, and to resist process of ejectment.”’

His policy was laid down in his letter “To the Irish Confederate and Repeal Clubs,” written in January, 1847—the dreadful famine year. But his suggestions were too sweeping for the middle-class group who were agitating for Repeal of the Union.

John Mitchel, however, saw the importance of Lalor’s policy. Before he was kidnapped and sent to his exile at the other side of the world Mitchel wrote a letter in which he said that he had fully adopted Lalor’s views and meant to act upon them as soon as occasion should fit and serve. It was through Mitchel the exile, and afterwards the American journalist, that Lalor’s views had a chance of being internationalized. He knew they would be internationalized. He urged all the nations to lay deep and strong “the only foundation that is firm under the foot of a nation—a secure and independent agricultural peasantry.” He saw that it was the established social order and not any political constitution that really affected the people of a country—“political rights are but parchment. It is the social constitution that determines the condition of a people, that makes and moulds the life of a man.”

Lalor told Charles Gavan Duffy—the father of George Gavan Duffy whose signature appears on the Anglo-Irish Treaty—that the thing he had in mind dwarfed Repeal into a petty parish question. The movement which he wanted to see begun was one on which “Ireland may not alone try her own right, but try the right of the whole world.” It was a movement “on which you would be, not merely an asserter of old principles, often asserted and better asserted before her, an humble and feeble imitator and follower of other countries, but an original inventor, propounder and propagandist, in the van of the earth and heading the nations.” Thirty years after Lalor had first expounded his idea Michael Davitt created the organization that carried it and that also gave, as Lalor prophesied it would give, a driving force to every other Irish issue. Meanwhile other countries had become alive to the great issue. Did Lalor’s thought, I wonder, pass into America with Mitchel the exile? Standish O’Grady thinks it did. “It has come back into Europe,” he wrote, “advertising itself as ‘Progress and Poverty.’ Lalor’s idea, now well-clad, that is to say, well-printed, well-bound, less Irish and more nice, possibly, but beyond question robust and vehement, walks abroad everywhere to-day.” The consumptive hunchback who announced it in Ireland was put in jail and was kept there long enough to save the

Government the necessity of exiling him with Mitchel. He was released and he died and no fuss was made about his passing.

P. C. 18. i. 22.

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IT was the Persian delegate at Geneva, it seems, who told the League of Nations the simple truth about itself. Has any one noticed how regularly, almost invariably, it has been the Eastern peoples and their representatives who have set forth and acted upon the plain natural truth of things in all the recent international colloquies—the Indians, Turks, Egyptians, Russians and Chinese? The Russians, for instance, really apply the principle of self-determination which the Western Powers only talk about. In handing back territory and other property stolen from the Chinese and Persians, they really prove themselves anti-imperialists instead of contenting themselves, like us, with pretending to be such. It is rather odd that the only exhibits of good Christian ethics since the armistice have been furnished by those who in their blindness bow down to wood and stone. Yet in our modesty we send missionaries to those people. Some one who thought it worth while to do so could stand the church missionary organizations on their heads by simply drawing up in parallel columns the record of the actual public behaviour of the Christian Powers and the heathen Powers from, say, October, 1917, to the present time, and then asking the missionary organizations whether they had ever read “Bleak House” or heard of Mrs. Jellyby.

A. J. N. 26. ix. 23.

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I SEE that Mr. Henry L. Mencken has been offering a philosophic consideration of prohibition which is worth attention. “There is not the slightest visible sign,” he says, “that within the lifetime of men now living, the voluptuous consumption of ethyl alcohol will be countenanced by law in the Republic, and neither is there the slightest sign that it will ever be stopped by law.” On the other hand, he foresees a change “in the direction of a better order of bootlegging, as the disfranchisement of the Negroes has been better ordered in the South.” The disreputable little bootlegger with his poisonous concoctions will, in Mr. Mencken’s view, gradually be pushed to the wall by more responsible vendors until the business becomes

established on a relatively wholesome basis, while Congress and the States will gradually forget to provide money for enforcement. In short, the prophet of the Terrapin Belt predicts that the Nineteenth Amendment will eventually drop to the status of other blue laws that lie unhonoured on the statute-books, and while in principle the country will remain bone-dry, in practice “good liquor will be obtainable at reasonable prices.”

This seems to me a well-thought-out conclusion from one who has pondered deeply on the subject, and I am happy to pass along its comforting implications for the benefit of persons interested. In the good old days the distribution of liquor furnished a tidy revenue to the Federal and State Governments, and furnished wherewithal for the school systems of our principal cities; in fact, it was so thoroughly taxed and blackmailed that it was next to impossible for an honest man to make a living at it. Under the new moral dispensation the business is tax-exempt, and is compelled to yield tribute only to the official grafters. Though the number of these has greatly increased, as well as the scale of their exactions, it is a fair guess that as the industry adjusts itself to its extra-legal and taxless status, it will be found that the very fact that the trade has no standing in the courts of law will compel its merchants to adopt an exceptionally high standard of integrity and scrupulousness.

In this connexion I am reminded of a story that Lincoln Steffens picked up some years ago while rambling in the Far East. One of Steffens’s British friends in that part of the world had established an intimacy with one of the Elder Statesmen of Japan, a man rich in honours and experience. One day the Englishman bluntly asked the Japanese how it was that an Occidental, in trading in the Orient, found that he could trust a Chinese merchant implicitly, while the briefest experience taught him that the Japanese merchant must be watched even more sharply than the tricky Levantine. “The explanation is simple,” replied the Japanese. “Some time ago a period of particularly brilliant corruption set in in Chinese politics, and as far as the courts were concerned, justice became a mockery. Hence, in order to save the processes of trade from complete chaos and stagnation, the Chinese merchant was compelled to adopt the strictest ethical standards; and since that time his word has been as good as his bond. In Japan, however, the merchant has been under no such compulsion, for we have probably the finest code of legal justice in the world. Hence when you do

business with a Japanese, you must take your chances." It is pleasant to recall this story when conversing with some disheartened misanthrope who professes to believe that human beings can be honest only when in the rigid strait-jacket of what is called law and order.

H. K. 26. ix. 23.

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PROBABLY I ought to be ashamed to confess that I waited until my maturity to read a novel by one of the Brontës. It is true, nevertheless, that I read "Jane Eyre" but a few years ago, and have only now fallen victim to "Shirley." I have paid my due to the "moderns"; some I have read with admiration, some have engaged my fancy by their treatment of the mechanics of contemporary life, some have fascinated me by their sheer skill, photographic or psychological. Others, needless to say, have bored me, just as some Victorian authors have bored me. But a book by George Eliot or such a work as "Shirley" serves to restore the old sense of direction. Eager as I am, in my twentieth-century impatience, to whip out a blue pencil and tell these leisurely women tint they are obstructing the progress of their own story, I find myself at one with the *milieu*, absorbed in the development of the narrative, keen to discover the next move. The pains these writers took to chart the terrain, to weave a plot, to introduce their characters at the right time and place, to relate their background, action and persons! If it were for "composition" alone, as painters use the word, such a book as "Shirley" would repay perusal. But it yields so much more than insight into the novelist's craft: here is a wellspring of good English, a bit of social history, a living picture of England a century ago, and the revelation of an orderly mind that is well-attuned to a warm heart. Perhaps I am over-enthusiastic; late converts are likely to be more ardent than those caught young.

B. W. H. 26. ix. 23.

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SEEING Mr. Cyril Maude in his excellent new comedy, "Aren't We All?" gives one a hint of the distance that we have already gone towards civilizing our conception of marriage. The play is most happily devoid of "moral purpose," but I have not seen anything in years which brings about a better

*rapport* between the moral sense of an audience and that of a playwright. By far the most interesting feature of the evening is the quick and intelligent response of the audience to certain lines which in the bad old days of my youth—Mrs. Wharton's "age of innocence"—would, I am sure, have been received in pensive and embittered silence. The moral of the play—for though it is free from any pestiferous moralities, it has a moral, and a sound one—is that the best insurance of happiness in such a delicate and difficult relation as marriage, is freedom. Even this the audience caught and approved at once, which I thought quite remarkable because it has long seemed to me that any such thing as faith in freedom had long ago disappeared from among us.

Of all things that human beings fear (and they are a timorous race) the one that strikes them with abject and utterly demoralizing terror is freedom. They are so afraid of it for other people that almost simultaneously they come to dread it for themselves. So they devise systems of checks and balances, restraints, moral sanctions, conventions and moral mass-expectations of one kind and another; they are willing to go to the most fantastic lengths in restriction and repression; but the one thing that they never yet have shown the courage to try is simple freedom, which some day they will have the happy surprise of discovering to be the only thing that really works. Pending this general discovery, each person can, in a much larger way than he thinks possible, discover it for himself, and thereby put himself in the way of a great deal of solid satisfaction and happiness. If one puts no expectation whatever, of any kind, upon any person, no matter how intimate one's association with him, the returns that one gets are marvellous. This does not mean making no demands upon him, but really, in one's inmost heart, not expecting anything of him, not *wishing* to make any demands upon him. Few are able to do this, fewer still are wise enough to wish to do it, and almost no one dares do it.

These considerations of course go far beyond their application to the very special and limited question of "how to be happy though married," which is the basis of Mr. Maude's new play. They apply to all relations of life, collective as well as individual, public as well as private. One of the things that will interest the historian of civilization in the United States is the progress of the principle of liberty since the Colonial period, to show what its actual practical applications have been, what their limitations were,

and how the popular understanding and acceptance of the doctrine itself have become modified in consequence. But all this is a long way from Mr. Maude's comedy, which shows merely that liberty—not a formal and factitious liberty, but liberty *ex animo*—is the indispensable condition of successful and happy love. The whole philosophy of success in this delicate and easily-marred relation was put strikingly in the remark of Philina to Wilhelm in Goethe's novel, "If I love you, what business is that of yours?"

The very advantages which American women enjoy, which lead foreigners to say we spoil them, really work against their interests where companionship with men is concerned, whether in marriage or out of it. The American girl has, relatively, a pretty wide range of experience and cultivation, and she has unusual opportunities for developing what cleverness she has, so that she rather tends to outstrip her male associates. If she picks the exceptional man for companionship, she finds him hard to live with, as such men notoriously are; if she picks the commonplace man, who is the most amiable soul on earth to live with, and who pampers her shockingly, she finds him really, in the long run, pretty dull. Adjustment either way is therefore much harder for her than for her European sisters. While Englishmen and Europeans are always very keen to tell us how badly the American woman has been brought up, I notice that they get mightily interested in her in very short order, and that they remain interested as long as she is around.

American life is a little easier on a young woman's willingness to become civilized than it is on a young man's. It may not be said to encourage her intellectual curiosity and her aspirations after culture, but it does not, perhaps, so expressly and truculently discourage them. Hence one may put it broadly that there are not enough relatively first-rate men to go around among the relatively first-rate women. This has a bearing, insufficiently recognized, upon divorce, and upon the alienations and miserable misunderstandings that beset the maintenance of an arbitrary monogamy. Some one has said (I think it was Mr. George Shaw, thought I may be unconsciously slandering him) that a first-rate woman would rather have a part-interest in a first-rate man than all of a second-rate man. This is quite natural, too, for men as for women, I think; that is, when they have come to the time, as Mr. Maude says in his comedy, "when humour takes the place of jealousy and when tolerance takes the place of indignation."

A. J. N. 3. x. 23.

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THE Londoners are now paying honour to the memory of Dick Whittington, “thrice Lord Mayor of London,” who died five hundred years ago. It appear that the classic story of his poverty and his cat is devoid of foundation; the researches of historians are said to show that he was well-to-do and that he never owned a cat. Science rubs its hands cheerfully, I suppose, over the banishment of another illusion, on its genial assumption that human beings should not believe anything that is not scientifically true. I was never able to support this assumption, and while I would not go so far as to call it immoral, I do not believe that it represents any real moral obligation. Scientific truth is not the only mode of truth in the world, and exclusive allegiance to scientific truth is an abounding source of error.

There is poetic truth, for example, and there is religious truth. Professor Huxley professed himself unable to understand how Faraday “could be a great natural philosopher with one side of his being, and a Sandemanian with the other”; and here he spoke as one who recognizes and pays allegiance to only one form or mode of truth. Matthew Arnold, on the other hand, in the midst of the bitter controversy that raged over the doctrine of inspiration, half a century ago, had the penetration to remark that one who believed all sorts of scientific errors about the Bible but who knew how to enjoy the Bible deeply—one, that is, whose spirit was open to its poetic and religious truth—was nearer the truth about the Bible than one who could pick it all to pieces but could not enjoy it.

To my mind, the point seems to be that the scientific truth of Whittington’s legend, or of the Bible, counts for precious little one way or the other, and that one’s allegiance to poetic truth in the one case and to poetic and religious truth in the other may quite safely disregard any pretension that science may make to any kind of jurisdiction in the premises. I believe that recognition of this simple principle would have obviated most of the wretched misunderstandings that have divided Protestant Christianity; that recognition of it even now would do more than anything to reunite and reconcile these divisions. What are the contentions that to-day are setting the fundamentalists and liberals, or latitudinarians, or whatever they are called, against one another—what are they but science?

Truth about the parentage and birth of Jesus, for instance, is not religious truth but scientific truth—well, let science attend to it. Protestantism will have a long way to go to catch up with the observation of Arnold, fifty years ago, that “there is truth of science and truth of religion; and truth of science does not become truth of religion until it is made religious. Let us have all the science there is from the men of science; and from the men of religion let us have religion.”

By an easy association, my mind is led along to consider the statements of Professor van Dyke and others, about the palming off of bogus Rembrandts and other old masters upon museums and wealthy amateurs. Here, too, scientific truth seems in danger of assuming an undue predominance. From the commercial point of view it has undoubtedly great importance. From all other points of view, however, there can be little importance in the scientific truth about a picture which, if not a Rembrandt, is so much like a Rembrandt that no one can say beyond peradventure whether it is a Rembrandt or not. I am reminded of the great controversy over the composite authorship of the Homeric poems. I think that I never underestimated the importance of scientific truth in this matter, but I always ventured to believe that the interests of poetic truth were paramount, and that the poetic truth of the Odyssey, for example, remained unimpaired whether the poem were put together by one author or by eighteen. What difference does it make to the poetic and religious truth of the book of Isaiah, whether it were all composed by the same man, or whether the latter part of it were written, as some one wittily said, “by another man of the same name”?

A. J. N. 17. x. 23.

I HAVE not yet girded myself up to see many plays of the new crop. What few I have seen are such as deal with the morals of sex, and I therefore feel that my weekly reflections are proceeding from a mind that needs disinfection; notwithstanding it was by luck and not management that I fell in with that kind of play. How good it would be if some play-writer would become an outright realist in these matters, instead of for ever contenting himself with expounding factitious and superficial moralities in a routine and superficial way! Practically nothing that the modern drama, from Ibsen down to Brieux, has done in portraying the fate of the light-o’-love, ever

made me feel that his or her fate was a very serious one or much to be considered, one way or the other. There would need to be better reasons than any to be found in “Ghosts” or “Damaged Goods,” for instance, to make an intelligent person think twice about larking to the top of his desire. These appeals to the passion of fear are based on a long chance; it is a hundred to one, or better, that their Nemesis will not arrive; and every intelligent person knows it.

There is a sound reason, a good reason, against looseness and philandering, and its dramatic possibilities are so attractive that one wonders why some dramatist does not take them up and explore them. One feels with some impatience that if play-writers must occupy themselves with the dreadful consequences of this kind of dissipation, they ought to have a good reason behind them instead of continually trying to make so much of bad ones. This reason is found in the peculiar, inevitable, and as far as I know inexplicable subjective change produced in the person who indulges to any degree, even the slightest and apparently most insignificant, in these irregularities. The distaste for philandering, the resentfulness of it that obtains especially between congenial and well-mated persons, is based upon a true and salutary instinct. This instinct is usually interpreted, unfortunately, both in life and in fiction, as a coarse and self-defeating jealousy. The interpretation is vulgarizing and retarding, but the instinct itself is sound, for this Nemesis never fails to arrive promptly and exact its full pay by quietly, subtly but inexorably *taking the edge off* (I do not know how to put it better) those relations in which one is really happiest, and in which one is really all the time aware that one is happiest. Nothing is quite the same afterwards, for oneself is not quite the same.

It is rather an odd thing that the play-writers, who are presumably somewhat akin to the poets, should be so far behind the poets in finding this out, and that they should prefer to follow the specious and superficial moralities of the sociologists, the theologians, the National Purity League and Mr. Sumner. The poets have always known where the sound moralities of this matter lay and have expressed it clearly. Burns, for example, looks at the superficial moralities only to pass them by—

> I waive the quantum o’ the sin,
> The hazard o’ concealin’—

yes, for those are at most uncertain and usually at some rate or other to be gotten over; instinct does not support them as true moralities. He then lays his finger upon the actual moralities, aware, like a true poet, that he has human instinct and experience solidly with him—

> But och! it hardens a' within And
> *petrifies the feelin'*.

Nothing could express better the retaliatory work of this Nemesis—it *petrifies feeling*. Now, what could be better for dramatic purposes than to trace and record, in a perfectly objective way, the process of this petrifaction of feeling? Turgenev did this in two of his novels; and a good playwright could do it on the stage in a way that would be no more spectacular than the intimate operations of nature ever are, but would be stupendous and grand—grand with the grandeur of Greek tragedy. It is odd, too, that the theologians have been so slow to discern the real penalty which nature invariably exacts from this form of error, when it is so clearly shown by one of their best-known poets. The first few chapters of the Book of Proverbs are an untouched mine for the dramatist. Little enough does Solomon say about the superficial moralities in his wonderful dramatic dissertation upon what he calls "the strange woman"; he would make dull reading for Mr. Sumner and the National Purity League; but, like Burns, with a true poetic instinct he touches the fundamental moralities when he says that *none who go unto her return again*. That is precisely what happens, and happens always. What returns is salvage, sometimes more, sometimes less; but the spirit never returns entire, as it was before.

A. J. N. 24. x. 23.

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THE other evening, I paid my respects to a friend who had just returned from Washington, and found her in a somewhat caustic mood. I remarked that I, too, was not overly fond of Washington; but to this she replied that her grievance was more specific. Her mission to the capital had had some connexion or other with organized charity; and (as this seemed the regular thing to do) a lady whose husband had recently risen to a position of importance in the Administration, had entertained at a formal affair a number of the charitarians who had gathered in the city. The hostess was ill

at ease, uncertain of her position and extremely overbearing, and in general her manner contrasted most unfavourably with the unassuming friendliness of a titled personage from abroad who happened to be numbered among the guests. The experience had so impressed my friend that she was ready to come out in full force for an established aristocracy.

Inasmuch as one hears this kind of thing rather frequently just now, it seems to me that the question may profitably be pushed a little farther and examined a little more closely. To begin with, I ought to say, I suppose, that my own experience tallies very nicely with that of my friend. I too have found the people who were bred to their position a sight more amiable than those who have climbed to theirs, but I have not become on this account an advocate of titular or hereditary social stratification. To my way of thinking, there is one attitude and one only, which may properly govern one's relations with one's fellows, and that is the humane attitude, that accepts each newcomer as an individual, standing altogether alone, from whom nothing is to be expected, and out of whom anything may come. On the surface, there is more of this indulgent humanity in the manner of the aristocrat than in that of the *arriviste*, and yet neither of them is genuinely humane. The former is amiable and unconcerned because he assumes that a social stratification favourable to himself is thoroughly well-established; the latter is nervous and aggressive because he is attempting to build up a distinction of the same sort; but I for one am still willing to believe that the society that has not yet put its aristocracy comfortably to sleep is the society that is farthest from a genuine individualism. G. T. R. 26. xii. 23.

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CHARLES BEARD, the historian, has mentioned to me the humorous idea of potting a lot of obituary-notices from the daily press and working them up into a kind of anthology of vacuity and blather. Surely nothing more clearly marks the degeneration of dignity than the death-notices of prominent men. One may read through column after column of them and be met by nothing but the most obvious and business-like insincerity. I often think of the three friends of Job, who came to him in his affliction and "sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great." They were rare old gentlemen, and they recognized the dignity of sorrow; and I

wish with all my heart that they were here to write our modern obituary-notices.

Curiously, the very genius of our language appears to be against the journalistic obituary-writer. It makes for sincerity and depth of feeling, more, I am sure, than that of any modern language that I know of. I would go as far as to say that no person can counterfeit deep emotion through three paragraphs of written English without so giving himself away that anyone of very moderate literary experience can detect the fraud. In this respect, our language resembles Latin. The apostrophe of Tacitus to his dead father-in-law, beginning, *Si quis piorum manibus locus*, and the inscription on the tomb of one of the Scipios, *Qui apicem gessisti, mors perfecit tua ut essent omnia brevia, honos fama virtusque, gloria atque ingenium*, can probably not be matched in any literature for their majestic accent of sincerity and emotional depth. Next to them, however, I should be inclined to put certain specimens of English obituary prose that occur to me, though not from the pages of our newspapers.

No one, however, outside the New Testament, has contrived to put the accent of sincerity into a literary and philosophical treatment of death like Marcus Aurelius; no one has contrived to throw such striking freshness about his reflections on the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and on the activities that make our span of years really profitable. I have not space to quote, but the reader can easily find his best passages by reference to the index in Mr. Long’s translation; and he may convince himself of their truth by substituting other names for those of the dead emperors, statesmen and warriors whom he cites. Metternich’s work has crumbled to nothing, and Talleyrand’s, Richelieu’s, Bismarck’s, and innumerable others. But not Bach’s, Shakespeare’s, Homer’s, Rembrandt’s, Dante’s, and the work of many more whose names stand in their glorious company. Does not this fact of itself show the side of life upon which we should bear lightly and that upon which we should rest with our whole weight?.

A. J. N. 27. ii. 24.

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# MIDDLE ARTICLES

# A DEAR MEMORY

THE revival of “Parsifal” at the Metropolitan seems to have passed without reminiscent mention of the greatest Wagnerian conductor of his time, Anton Seidl. Perhaps it is natural; the memory of a generation is short at its longest; but though it is twenty-one years, to the month, since he came to his untimely end in New York City, I feel somehow that but yesterday I last met him on his way to Fleischmann’s old café, by Grace Church. Seidl’s association with “Parsifal” was very close, for he was with Wagner in the days when the great work was composed, and knew the work as Wagner wished it to be known.

The night he received the cable-message from Cosima Wagner asking him to return to Bayreuth and conduct the festival performances of “Parsifal,” he was happy with the eager delight of boyhood. He received the message the day he was entertained by the Lotus Club. It was a great night, particularly memorable for the distinguished company of famous visiting musicians. I was then playing in “Secret Service,” at the Garrick Theatre; and, the night after the Lotus Club gathered, Seidl came around to my dressing-room and asked me if I would go with him to Bayreuth. I gladly accepted, though I could not for the life of me imagine how I could undertake the journey. Later on, Seidl was engaged by the Royal Opera syndicate at Covent Garden to conduct the Wagnerian performances to be given in the early part of the season. Then followed a period of anxious waiting on my part until Frohman arranged to send the “Secret Service” company to play at the Adelphi Theatre, London. I regarded this decision as an amazing piece of luck, for it meant I should be 3000 miles nearer Bayreuth. Seidl reached London before I did, and he was rehearsing at Covent Garden when I appeared on the scene. Many happy days we spent together, dining at Romano’s, the Café Royal, and the Continental, where Seidl had rooms. “Hair” Seidl, as *Punch* called him, was exceedingly popular with Covent Garden audiences, and was soon known to the passers-by in London streets. He was, however, much too simple-hearted to fall a victim to the social wiles of the upper ten, who would have lionized him without mercy. He said, “They are very good and kind, and some like the music, but I think I prefer their dogs and their horses.” Disraeli would have

loved that sentence, and no less the quiet tolerance of Seidl when he said it. In after years, when I was stage-director of the Royal Opera, one of the real music-lovers of the syndicate told me he had never heard anything in opera like Seidl's reading of "Tristan and Isolde" and "Walküre." The men in the orchestra often spoke to me about him, and they marvelled at his power.

When I reached Bayreuth he was at the station to meet me; and in driving down to Graben where he lodged, he explained with that delightfully humorous smile flickering about his sensitive mouth, that Cosima had asked him to stay at Wahnfried, but "I told her I would like to be quiet." So he took rooms over a tannery, at the edge of a little canal, where he had strolled many a time during his apprenticeship with Wagner. I shall never forget the first few days in that homely abode; the smell of the tannery was sometimes enough to drive one mad. But the simplicity of life, the charm of the tanner and his family—for Seidl knew how to pick his associates for their human qualities—their kindliness and thrifty neatness, were delightful. We had two beds in one large room at the back of the house, and many a night we lay awake for hours talking through the darkness to each other. One very warm day, I remember, we were in our shirt-sleeves and free of collars and ties, when the King of Württemberg came to call on Seidl. As soon as he was announced, I bolted into the bedroom. When I returned, presentably clothed, Seidl and the King were sitting together on the old sofa chatting intimately about Wagner, Liszt, and America.

The first rehearsal of the orchestra is unique in my memory of such events, for Cosima, *en suite*, sat up on the apron of the stage in something like royal state. Before Seidl had gone very far with the prelude, Cosima tapped with her parasol and murmured something about the rendition being rather strange to her. Seidl gave her a reproving glance which rather shocked her *suite*, and said, "If you will wait, you will know." And she did wait, and she knew—when the orchestra rose to its feet at the end of the prelude and applauded enthusiastically. There was nothing but praise after that incident. The effect of the performance upon some of the people was extraordinary; I can see Emma Calve being led away after the third act, completely overwrought. Even George Moore, usually placid and self-contained, was so strangely moved that an hour or two afterwards, at Beierlein's café, he trembled with emotion. And poor Felix Mottl, not by

any means given to rendering praise when due, was deeply affected; some years afterwards, when he came to Covent Garden, he told me that it was one of the greatest musical events of his life. But what a company assembled that year at Bayreuth! Can it be really so long ago—so long ago since Seidl, Ernst Van Dyk, and I, in that slow-moving carriage, were drawn up the hill past Jean Paul Richter's cottage, to Fantasie? How impatient Van Dyk, perhaps the greatest Parsifal of all, was with the coachman, and his lazy horses; Seidl the while chaffing him about the speed of American trotters! They spoke English—broken—out of courtesy to me. How Seidl roared with laughter when Van Dyk jumped up, shaking his fist at the back of the coachman, and cried, "I have horses in Vienna that can stand quicker than yours can walk." Then at Fantasie we met as cosmopolitan a crowd as there was to be found anywhere attending any festival in any part of the world. There were Queen Alexandra, then Princess of Wales; German royalty, Russian royalty, Italian royalty; French princes and dukes; indeed, the baronage of Europe generally, seemed pretty well represented; but, more important, the intellectual commoners of both hemispheres, the servants of literature, art and music, were there.

One day Seidl got Kranich, the chief machinist of the Wagner Theatre, to show us the workings of the wonderful stage, on a day when no opera was given. That evening we were alone and enjoyed our meal under the trees in the garden of a café set on a hill overlooking the town. And Seidl told me, in the quiet of the dusk, that wonderful story of his association with Wagner. I think it was our last night together. The next day I returned to London with the thought in my mind that he would return early in the spring to resume his work at Covent Garden. Alas, for music here, in England, everywhere, he did not return. He passed away suddenly. And those who had enjoyed his genius at the Metropolitan and Carnegie Hall learned on the day of his funeral, that his memory was enshrined in the hearts of the common folk of New York. *Si quis piorum manibus locus . . . placide quiescas!*

F. N. 24. iii. 20.

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## RICHARD PARKES BONINGTON

THERE is pathos in the life of Bonington; it was so short, so busy, so full of beauty and charm. No young painter's life was so rich in promise; he is the Keats of painting. They were contemporaries, and neither reached the age of thirty; but each left treasures which have enriched the race. Bonington was born in Nottinghamshire in October, 1801, and, as a lad, roamed the green glades of Sherwood Forest, and watched the sunlight and the summer breeze play upon the Trent. His father seems to have been a lover of nature, a humanitarian, and an artist of parts; indeed the boy was prepared for his career by his father in the open fields, where all the play of nature lay before him in his early years.

The Bonington family left England in 1816 for Paris, and shortly after they were settled there Richard was found studying in the Louvre. He was, occasionally, a pupil of Baron de Gros. But his spirit was too free to be caught in the routine of the schools. His early training had given him a long start of the students he met at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; and his new-found friends soon discovered that he would go his own way to the goal, expressing his conceptions with originality. How much he gained in positive instruction from the French artists cannot be computed, for it is pretty clear that he was a rebel from the first year of his sojourn in Paris. He was not the product of any school; he was original, and created the elements upon which the French school of landscape was founded. He could not have seen, much less have studied, the works of Constable and Turner before he left England for Paris in 1816. There is no record before that date of his spending any time away from Nottinghamshire. How often he visited London between 1816 and 1822, is not known; we do, however, know that he spent most of those years in France. He went to Italy in 1822, in which year he exhibited for the first time; two water-colors at the Salon, for which he received a premium from the Société des Amis des Arts. At the famous Salon of 1824 he was awarded a gold medal for his works. In 1824 Constable's "Haywain" created a sensation when it was exhibited at the Louvre; but Bonington had already, when only twenty-three years old, won the admiration of the most eminent artists of France. That Constable and Turner should divide the credit of taking the secret of painting air and sunshine from England to France can be best explained by the fact that in later years their works attracted a circle of admirers who imagined that these masters were the precursors of Bonington.

Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about this young artist was his abounding versatility. It did not matter what he put his hand to; even in lithography, he “achieved notable victories.” In oil his performances “were worthy of the masters of his time.”

> As a lad [wrote Eugene Delacroix] he developed an astonishing dexterity in the use of water-colours, which were in 1817 an English novelty. Other artists were perhaps more powerful or more accurate than Bonington, but no one in the modern school, perhaps no earlier artists, possessed the ease of execution which makes his works, in a certain sense, diamonds by which the eye is pleased and fascinated, quite independently of the subject and the particular representation of nature. The same is true of the costume-pictures which he afterwards painted. Even here I could never grow weary of marvelling at his sense of effort and his great ease of execution. Not that he was quickly satisfied; on the contrary, he often began over again perfectly finished pieces which seemed wonderful to us. His dexterity was, however, so great that in a moment he produced with his brush new effects which were as charming as the first and more truthful.

Such is the glowing tribute of a great French artist who was the friend and comrade of Bonington. “No Frenchman before him had so painted the play of light on gleaming costumes and succulent greens,” says Richard Muther. One of the first to make an appearance in the Romantic school, “he was the most natural and the most delicate.” The training he received as a lad when he wandered with his father along the banks of English rivers, through the woods, and among the dells of a country full of subtle colour and ever-changing effects of light, gave him the alert vision of the artist who comprehends the secret charms of nature, and appreciates her grace and beauty everywhere. He, perhaps more than any other painter, could add a spiritual tone to the atmospheric vagaries of day and night and the changing colours of the seasons.

Most of his works are to be found in the Wallace collection and at Hartford House. There are three of his water-colours in the South Kensington Museum. Few are to be found in private collections. There are two Boningtons in the Metropolitan Museum of Art which are really fine examples of his work. One, a landscape, is a view of Mantes on the Seine, but it loses much in interest because its brilliance is dulled by a coat of discoloured varnish. If this varnish were removed, the picture would gain enormously in light and colour-values. As it is, the water and heavy logs in the foreground seem to be of the same tone and texture as the tree, which is without any value of shadow at all. Up the river in the distance are the spires of the church of Notre Dame, a foundation which dates from the

twelfth century. The tower of St. Maclou rises above a group of trees. The banks of the river on the right should be full of light, showing cattle browsing on the rising ground and drinking at the water's edge. There are figures in the foreground reclining on logs. One of these figures has, of course, the famous Bonington spot of red, a touch of color used with wonderful effect. Over all is the great spreading sky full of fine warm light; the sky the artist gave to most of his pictures, which seems always like a watching soul hovering tenderly over the earth.

The second picture, called "Seacoast," gives a pretty good idea of what the other picture really contains in the way of fine values; for in this scene of sand and sea and sky there is a luminosity which only Bonington could produce. The radiant air seems to tremble, and suggests that feeling of exhilaration which comes when we walk along the shore and turn our faces to the reviving breeze. Here are simplicity and sincerity in all their grace. Again there is the glorious, spreading sky, rising from the deep horizon of the sea, like a curtain of glowing pearl. In the foreground there are heavy stretches of shore and sand interspersed with luminous pools; the sea rolls in, under the pressure of a light wind. There are several figures, full of animation and colour, with a magical atmospheric effect of fineness and clearness thrown about them. A glimmering path of light stretches from the edge of the water straight down the foreground; a reflection coming from we know not where—perhaps from the sun behind a great billow of cloud, perhaps shot across the sea and mirrored in the crests of wavelets thrown upon the shore.

In the Hearn Collection at the Metropolitan there is a third painting catalogued as by Bonington, which does not quite establish itself as a work of the young master, but rather as a good example of the work of William Shayer. Mr. John McFadden's collection has a Bonington of singular beauty. It is a beach scene; again, nearly all sand and sea and sky, but of a purity of atmosphere unsurpassed anywhere. In the "Chateau of the Duchess DeBerri," a scene on the Garonne, one enjoys, again, the exhilaration of great space, with its splendid rolling white clouds revealing here and there the blueness of a sky which exchanges colour with the ocean and feels its mists. Again, in this picture, there is the spot of red—the touch of colour used afterwards so often by Corot—in the coat of the boy. The river itself is almost without a ripple. The boats are in-shore, and their sails

hang drowsily at the masts. The chateau lies away in the background, imbedded in a grove of trees, and does not dominate the scene.

The exhilaration of great space is communicated by some of his street scenes showing fine specimens of old architecture. The Venetian scenes are monumental in architectural effect, and they also give the sense of vastness, by the perspective, and by the sky that hangs like a canopy at the back. An exception to this characteristic of the greater number of his works, is to be found in a picture of quite unusual distinction that was shown at the Art-Treasures Exhibition in Manchester in 1857. It is called “An Old Turk.” A man reclines upon a divan, his long narghile lies across his knees. The subject is simple enough, but it is so full of the languor of the East, both in its setting, and in the countenance and attitude of the Turk, that one wonders how an English boy who spent most of his life in England and France could have depicted so accurately the characteristics of an alien race. It is, however, the colour in this picture that is so wonderful; the greens, blues, and blacks glow with animation and they are harmonized in a masterly way. No better work of its kind has come from his contemporaries either of Britain or France. The technique is equal to Gainsborough’s; the brush-work and finish as smooth, as clear, as Raeburn’s and Decamps’.

Bonington died before he had completed his twenty-seventh year. Sir Thomas Lawrence said he had never known, except in the case of George Harlow, “the early death of talent so promising, and so rapidly and obviously improving.” The young artist whom the French called “our Bonington,” was characteristically English in self and work. He was perhaps more individualistic than any of his contemporaries. With all the care and pains he took to improve his work there could be in it no scamping of essentials; he was thorough and fundamental, there was nothing of the “scenic artist” about him. He revealed himself in his works; they show his full vision of things eternal, his yearning for beauty in life itself, his kinship with the immensities, his desire to linger in nature’s loveliness, and to enjoy her gifts to the full.

F. N. 31. iii. 20.

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## PAUL MANSHIP’S VISION

IN his bust of John D. Rockefeller now on exhibition in New York, Paul Manship has given us a work that will be remembered long after the Rockefeller bequests to universities and institutes are forgotten. Rarely is such exquisite workmanship to be found; the delicacy and finesse never for a moment lose surety of touch. Sincerity and candour are expressed in every line. It is the most penetrating and courageous portrait that has been produced by a sculptor for many a long day. It is a revelation of consummate artistry founded upon a large sense of drama and characterization. Here is something of which American art can justly be proud.

After studying Sargent's portraits of John D. Rockefeller, the bust by Paul Manship comes as a revelation of the possibilities of expressing in marble the complexities of lineament and character. The Sargent portraits give something too much of the philanthropist and the repose of tie self-satisfied Baptist; they discover a man whose interesting past has been washed away in the godliness of large bequests. There is, however, something more to be observed in this subject than merely a well-groomed benevolent gentleman of great age enjoying his ripe years in hard-earned repose. It is one thing to depict the characteristics of a subject at a phase of life which is altogether exceptional, and so create an impression that the mood and period selected by the artist are typical. This is what is usually done, but it is never satisfactory, for each life has its own drama, its own conflicts, defeats and triumphs, and the test of the artist's power comes in his appreciation of the traits and characteristics which have been instrumental in producing the whole man. This is what Paul Manship has succeeded in doing—he brings the whole man before us; he has dramatized the life of John D. Rockefeller.

Even to the choice of the colour and tone of the stone, which has a sear and yellow note, Manship has succeeded in obtaining astonishing completeness. The head, confidently poised, is set forward from the broad, round shoulders which slope gracefully away to the lithe arms. The right shoulder seems to be raised, and is somewhat shorter than the left. Indeed the right side of the bust reveals the tense determination of the man. It is indicative of a concentration of nervous energy which has been the propelling force of his career. In strange contrast to the head, so full of interest, the neatness of the clothes, the prim collar, and the tidy cravat, give

an appearance of sleekness. The head has nobility—is well-balanced and has great depth and breadth, though there is a squareness about it which tells of obduracy, power of concentration, acquisitiveness. The expansion from the temples back over the ears is quite extraordinary. The temples are sunken, the cheek bones high with a fullness extending far towards the nostrils. The nose is Roman, the nostrils Gallic almost in their delicacy, and *retroussé*. But with the nose, as with every separate feature of this strangely fascinating face, there is found much more than form; there is something ferret-like about it, the wide-open nostrils seem to be scenting prey from afar. The upper lip, long and thin, emphasizes remarkably two strong, protruding muscles tapering down to its centre which seems to sag beneath their weight. Animal-like it overhangs the chin, and reveals a strange note of ferocity. The lower lip is also thin, with a feminine fineness and delicacy; here is all the cold, calculating power of the woman who will take what she wants no matter what the cost may be. From this beautifully modelled bow there is a slight recession in a chin of no great depth or strength. The notes here are feline in their quality; it is a beautiful chin, almost youthful, yet it adds no gracious quality to the face taken as a whole. The ears are the strangest that mortal ever possessed; turn them upside down and they are the ears of the fox. The wrinkled flesh falls from a sunken spot in the right cheek over the jaw where it joins the chin; the lines of care, determination, and tenacity show more on the right side than on the left, but nothing has disturbed the firmness and smoothness of the upper lip, the mouth and chin. The main muscles of the front neck are distended, and suggest the man’s great power of swallowing severe criticism and contemptuous opinion; all emotions seem suppressed by grim intellectual restraint. The eyes look far over the obstacles which have stood in his way. They see the goal shining in the distance; they stare into the future, cold, heartless, merciless, with a penetration that amounts to certainty; they are the eyes of a remorseless mathematician calculating every problem to a nicety and forecasting every difficulty. The brows are raised, for nothing must cast a shadow across that vision, indeed the brows seem to recede at the very point where the pupils of the eyes glare straight ahead. The bust carries in it absolutely nothing that strikes the note of human sympathy; it is barren of everything that is lovable. Here is intellectual force carried to the extreme, without compassion, without mercy. It is extraordinary how so much that is delicate

and refined in line and poise can make up an ensemble that is so sinister and forbidding.

Nothing reveals the emptiness of success so much as this face. The Phoenicians might have placed this on the altar they raised to Mammon, the god of ill-gotten gains.

F. N. 21. iv. 20.

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## THOMAS HARDY AT EIGHTY

THAT was a great evening for Oxford, the 10th of last February. An enormous crowd was gathered in the theatre—all the fine youth of the University, those who had survived the war, those who had succeeded the dead, young men and young women with years of full life before them still, dons and their wives (breathing culture), and a few battered old travellers of life like myself. We had come partly to see a selection from the scenes of Thomas Hardy's "Dynasts," put on the stage by the Dramatic Society of the undergrads themselves. But chiefly we had come because it was known that the great poet himself was to be present. He was soon to be eighty, and youth longed to see him before he died.

For myself, good fortune had enabled me to meet him frequently before in the course of years, and I soon discovered that small and delicate figure which seemed only anxious to shrink out of sight at the end of a row of stalls. There was that fine, domed head, that delicately moulded face, pale and lean, covered with delicate wrinkles as though it were moulded in wax, each wrinkle seeming as though designed to express in combination with every other all the sorrows and pities and ironies of mankind. With shy melancholy, the pale grey eyes looked out upon the stage. In quiet and unaffected tones the low voice answered any observation, quite simply and without an effort at display. He recognized the occasion. He was pleased to see even fragments of his great epic-drama performed—indeed for some of us it counts among the very few great epics of the world. At the end, all longed for him to stand up, to go upon the stage and speak us a word or two, so that for the next sixty years some personal memory of his voice and look might remain with those eager youths, that they might tell their grandchildren that they had once beheld him. But ere the play was over he

was gone. Like the Scholar Gypsy of old, he had slipped away to the Cumnor hills, and was gone.

What a record lay hidden behind that shy and delicate figure, that waxen and mournful face! There was the man who for fifty years had held the world entranced by the beauty of a mind capable of sharing all life's sorrow and some of its joy, and by the beauty of a style which was but the expression of that inmost mind—the style that is both the substance and the architectural form of thought. As one looked at him, one recalled the great pictures of life which he had created and described in prose—"Far from the Madding Crowd," "The Return of the Native," "Tess," and "Jude the Obscure," besides so many other beautiful and ironic scenes, so many other beautiful and tragic personalities. For eighty years those pale, sad eyes had looked steadily out upon the world, and like the poet Heine he could cry, "O ancient Earth, I've counted all thy sorrows." We thought of those immortal scenes—of Bathsheba and Trim, of Egdon Heath, of Tess christening her baby, of the Isle of Slingers, and of Jude who gazed with yearning upon our very Oxford from the Berkshire downs. No writer had ever come so close to the heart of ancient England—of the south-land which is the ancient heart of England, with its peculiarly English strain of men and women, humorous, kindly, ironic, capable of profound emotions that lie restrained and dumb. No imaginative writer in prose, I think, had ever come so near the heart of Earth. It was as though he felt still bound to her by the cord that binds a child to its mother's life. Looking at him, I saw the vision of Man passing across a wide and desolate moorland under the obscure light of a moon behind driving clouds. Sprung from Earth, he was soon again to return to her. Under his feet lay the stony relics of uncouth creatures that lived and died and had been obliterated uncounted ages before Man himself appeared. Above his head moved uncounted stars, speechless and unknowable. On one hand rose the gaunt monuments of the "Hanging Stones," where men once worshipped. On the other rose a gallows with clanking chains, and the ruins of a village church. Man's eyes were fixed upon the dubious path before him, leading to a destination he could not name, and perhaps to no destination of any kind. But in the heart of wandering Man burned a compassion which consumed him like cruel rage, and in his brain moved thoughts that ranged beyond the flaming bulwarks of the stars.

What has been the deepest motive of Thomas Hardy's life? Some might say beauty, some irony, some the complexities of human love. I do not know, but whenever I think of him I remember that divine saying of Francis Bacon: "The nobler a man's nature is, the more objects of compassion he hath." (I am obliged to quote from memory.) Hardy looks out upon all forms of life and feeling with a compassion all the more poignant for its sense of ironic fate. His compassion includes the horse that is wounded or slain in battle (in vain during the Boer War he pleaded that horses should not be ridden up to the firing line), and it includes the pheasants wounded to make sport for England's landed gentry (after that pitiful chapter in "Tess," as he once told me, the County Families resolved to have no more to do with him). I think he even feels compassion for the trilobite buried ages ago in the Dorset cliffs. But for men and women his compassion is boundless as the sea, his pity as deep. Human beings are so human, so capable of love and joy and sin and sweetness, so capable of sorrow, and so entangled in the ironic intricacies of existence as it moves. It is an obscure and fitfully lighted life through which he beholds them travelling: *"Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna est iter in silvis."* As to Gods, Man knows nothing of them, and he should have the courage at all events to refuse a fool's paradise of inane and unreasoning conjecture.

Hardy once told me that but for poverty he would never have written prose, but only poetry. Rich people have a pleasing habit of calling poverty a blessing in disguise, and in this case certainly one can perceive the blessing through it. If he had not written prose, we should all have been poorer. But poetry was always the darling of his heart, and now in old age he never ceases to cherish it. Beautiful in many ways the results have been, and most encouraging for vitality. I love to think of the man of eighty working at his poems, like Socrates turning Æsop's fables into verse on the morning of his execution. But after all, the grandest result of his abandonment of the prose form is that epic-drama of "The Dynasts." In that great poem the whole man's inward self and thought found full expression. His sense of Time, his sense of Irony, his sense of Pity are here heard audibly speaking through the voices of the Spirits of the Years, the Spirits Ironic, and the Spirits of the Pities. Looking back over one short century alone, we see revealed to us again the battles of our great-grandfathers, the struggles of armies hostile or allied; the intrigues of monarchs, and the

conspiracies of politicians driving millions to early death; the passions and sufferings of common, kindly men and women, all vanished now like the unsubstantial fabric of a vision, but that the poet calls them up. There the glorious armies go again, crawling over Europe like maggots on a leaf or mites in rotten cheese. Once more we hear the Ironic Spirit laughing its acrid laugh; once more the Spirits of the Pities utter their lamentation. Nor is the vision limited to a century past. What is Europe since the war but the scene which had been described by the poet ten years before the war began? —

The point of view then sinks downward through space, and draws near to the surface of the perturbed countries, where the peoples, distressed by events which they did not cause, are seen writhing, crawling, heaving and vibrating in their various cities and nationalities.

So moves the Immanent Will, inexplicable, irresistible, unconscious; and, with the Spirits of the Years, we can but ask:

> O Immanence that reasonest not
> In putting forth all things begot,
> Thou build’st thy house in space—for what?
> O Loveless, Hateless!—past the sense
> Of kindly-eyed benevolence
> To what tune dances this Immense?

The Spirit Ironic answers with the customary sneer. It is only from the Spirit of the Pities that we obtain one little gleam of possible hope—that Spirit of the Pities of whom Bacon said, “The nobler a man’s nature is, the more objects of compassion he hath.”

> Yet, Great and Good, Thee, Thee we hail,
> Who shak’st the strong, who shield’st the frail.
> Who had’st not shaped such souls as we
> If tendermercy lacked in Thee!

As Socrates said, of a similar conjecture, it is not a very secure raft to set sail upon through life, but after all it is the best we have, and it is built within the heart of man alone.

H. W. N. 16. vi. 20.

# PANTOMIME

A MYTHOLOGY has grown around the motion-picture in behalf of pantomime. Literally the motion-picture is a pantomime now; it has been so from the beginning. But its progression does not lie in the path of more pantomime—much rather toward less of it.

In considering the art of acting, if the voice is left out altogether, the problem consists of a choice of those details of gesture that will best convey and recall and suggest the whole of life—the sense of actuality. Punch and Judy is this suggestion at its simplest. The puppet's repertoire is an elementary one in which every move fits to a conventional, stereotyped and widely understood meaning.

This is, in the main, pantomime as it has been practised up to the present by most actors for the screen. The fault here has been with the material. The chief complaint against the motion-picture is that it is a stereotyped and easily anticipated product throughout, endowed with little beauty except that which may be accidental to it. Plot, narrative, characters, and characterization have all been set in a uniform mould. This uniformity has progressed to such an extent that producers themselves are now aware that the "studio type" must be eliminated before their work will assume both lifelike and artistic proportions. Pantomime, in its largest sense—the silent acting of a part—is much more than merely communication or expression. It is, to begin with, highly decorative. If the ballet has taught anything to the modern stage, it is that by the fine selection of his movements the actor may not only significantly and eloquently talk with his head, his eyes, his shoulders, his hands and his feet, and his entire carriage, but may make that utterance beautiful as well. Such actors as Miss Barrymore and her brothers, have certain moments of beauty that are almost exterior to the moment itself; bits of decorative line that are an added gift of the gods who see to the setting of stages.

But pantomime is always much more than expressive or decorative. It is at its best suggestive and reflective. In its power of suggestion it can be the finest of all instruments for tragic drama, awakening vast cycles of epic memory with the appropriate sweep of the hands or lift of the eyes. It is always concerned with compressing a host of human memories into a single formula that will stand for the lot of them. Because it does, by this very act,

drop so much that is disordered and unfinished and realistic, and because it is in its very nature balanced and patterned, pantomime is able to call to mind all the large generalizations of life, on which much tragic drama is based. Synge, in his essay on “The Tragic Theatre” says for tragedy, “we summon rhythm, balance, pattern, images that remind us of vast passions, the vagueness of past times, all the chimeras that haunt the edge of trance . . .” This was the acting of Bernhardt, florid with an excess of formula, by which nevertheless great hinterlands of emotion were called forth.

Indeed, pantomime is French in many of its avenues, and most French in its awareness, and by the purposes of self-consciousness it sometimes serves. The acting of such players as the Guitrys, father and son, has references and implications, with France behind them, that lead deeply into the entire art of illusion. The son writes pungent, witty farces and comedies, related closely to the sex-hunt, that are just so much better than our own gross transcriptions of the fundamental human adventure as most French prefiguring and vision of human beings and their affairs is clearer, more accurate and less dishonest than our own. The father acts with delicacy and precision in scoring the shades and passages of emotion and thought. His selected art throws into relief the insensitive method of many British and American actors who stand in the first rank in their own countries. Comparatively, the Guitrys have much in their favour.

The French stage, like the Italian stage in a less well-defined fashion, has an obviously well-developed alphabet of interpretation, a complete gamut of pantomimic expression. The French passion for making everything clear has had something to do with this development of definite symbols for dramatic ideas. But French culture generally is an instance of the increasing conventionalization of any well-founded and sophisticated life. In music and in painting, French art has spread through layer on layer of restatement and revision into the cool atmospheres of a patterned beauty. In the theatre, the French objective has always been a high clear laughter at human folly. And comedy, close to life but always just outside its gates, demands a ritual and routine of expression, a schematic structure on which to survey the scene and from which to shoot at it.

Copeau disclosed this when he played at the Garrick Theatre in New York. But the Guitrys have an even more sensitive and highly developed sign-language, so complete and so well organized and closely interwoven

and impinging, that it even has moments of overcoming the impediment of conventionalization, to the point of imparting the emotion of reality. It does not have many moments of this kind, because, being French, it deals for the most part with material that is in itself full of attitudes, commentary upon life, draws constantly a trajectory of intellectual observation, as distinct from the representation of life itself. Even in “Pasteur,” which Lucien Guitry plays with a quietude, a lack of gesture and an absence of rising and falling tonality that is astonishing, the procession of facts in a great man’s life is not accomplished without accompanying overtones of fine comedy and philosophic wit. Its delicate regard for the sentiment of the occasion does not keep it from penetrating into the whole humbuggery of great men, the ceremonial about them, illuminating the rise of human careers to climax and recognition, and exposing the stupidity of the human audience to the actual elements of greatness growing before it.

These have been the purposes, before Molière and since, of the French theatre, and they have brought an increasing refinement to the use of pantomime. It is not without astonishment for the observer that Lucien Guitry becomes reminiscent of Charlie Chaplin. The Continental music-hall is full of such actors, and doubtless the great Chaplin found the bare materials for his genius there. Comedy best can use and can thrive upon a stenography of the kind the French have given to their stage. Life itself is not comic at all; it is the bare bone of facts. Only human intervention, human observation, the sudden interruption of a human attitude, makes comedy out of a handful of common things. Chaplin, it might be said, with the very smallest bag of tricks, stands constantly as the figure of such intervention.

The problem of the motion-picture as it refers to pantomime is not one, however, that Chaplin can solve. It becomes clear now, as the motion-picture goes on its way that a Chaplin can have little effect on the main stream of it. He is unique, availing himself of the machinery of cinematography for expression, but contributing nothing to the infinitely troubling problem of expressing the aspect of life itself in terms of motion.

There are well-defined differences between the stage and the screen. Both are alike now in their swift movement toward naturalism. In this light, the acting of fine if limited artists such as the Guitrys has no meaning outside of being an abundant exposition of an art that is purely French,

more French than dramatic. The tendency on the modern stage, a belated ripple of the widening circle from Moscow, is an effort to show life in the very essence of its accidental, unfinished, and despotic quality, to thrust into the very texture of the presentation an imputation of the flux, and constant change and transformation of colour and form that modern persons find in living itself. No formulized, established mode or ritual of expression is equal to such a great task. It needs most of all an unflagging and constant imaginative heat, which will throw no imagery into the same style twice and will give to presentation the differentiation, the strange quality of each moment, which is in life itself.

The public itself asks more and more for the bare bodkin of existence, the stuff of fact. Life is seldom so neatly trimmed as the conventional drama makes it out to be, and a tide has set in against its conventional presentation on the stage. The frustration of modern life has created a hunger and desire for an art that will show these incompletions in all their intimacy. That is why a set pantomimic style will not survive now in the movie. It is apparent that the elliptical and conventionalized gesture, of studied “pantomime,” is what the cinema must be rid of, along with all the rigid formula of plot, of action and of characterization that have stupefied and choked it. In place of a great formulization of acting, the problem of the motion picture today is that of a more exact and more appropriate selection of gesture, harmonious and decorative, and a more closely woven texture of representation.

Mechanically considered, aside from the effort of the actor himself, the motion-camera always makes the first choice of the details of illusion; and this choice is an automatic one. No camera yet invented can run swiftly enough in its flow of film to catch every subtle rhythm in unbroken smoothness, every fine shade of movement in its complete quality. The actor’s constant fight, if he assumes the burden of modern illusion, is not to further this elimination. It is instead to make his own selection of gesture so evocative in the single movement and so complete in the gamut, that he is certain to give at every moment actual proof of that complete absorption of the substance and spaces of contemporary life that every art gives at its zenith.

R. B. 1. ix. 20.

# THE DIVINE RIGHT OF LINEAGE

TRULY, the progress of knowledge is slow and painful. For at least a score of years, anthropologists have been pointing out that race has often little to do with either language or nationality. Indeed, during the great war some of them made heroic efforts to put the essential information before the public, but, as Schiller might say, against folk-science even the anthropologist battles in vain.

Yet the relevant facts are by no means difficult to get at. Go to any large gathering of Germans and scrutinize the crowd. Then compare them with the people you saw at the French theatre two or three winters ago. The chances are that you can match rather more than half the individuals of either group in the other; on the score of mere looks the greatest specialist in the world could never tell which were Germans and which were French. On the other hand, even a careless observer would note that neither the French audience nor the German *Verein* represents a homogeneous group. If they are truly representative gatherings, a number of conspicuously tall men will be found to stand out sharply in either case from a larger body of moderately-sized ones. There will be a few markedly fair individuals amidst a number of distinctly darker type. Again, there will be decided differences in the shape of the heads: in both assemblies there will be men, the width of whose heads is rather more than eight-tenths of the length, while in others the relative width descends towards three-fourths or even falls below that ratio.

Having regard then to the way in which these three traits are associated, we might classify each of our artificial national groups into natural biological ones. From this point of view we should then be able to set off in both of them a subdivision of tall, fair and rather long-headed men, leaving another made up of stocky, darker-haired and markedly broad-headed individuals. From the French audience we might further segregate some men of pronouncedly swarthy complexion, shorter than the broad-skulled group, rather longer-headed even than the tall group. To this last subdivision there would be no equivalent among the Germans. Ignoring it, however, for the present, we may say that a scientist classifying mankind as to physical appearance alone would not hesitate to combine certain Frenchmen and Germans into one division and certain others into a second

division altogether irrespective of the differences in speech and political affiliation. To use the accepted nomenclature, he would recognize not a French and a German race, but a tall Nordic or Teutonic and a medium-sized Alpine race, each including at the same time natives of both countries.

But in making this classification the investigator is creating two ideal types, to which only a minority of individuals conform at all closely. There are many men who are both tall and dark, for example; just as there are many short blonds. Nature, in other words, has not really segregated all existing individuals into the two types, Nordic and Alpine. In the total population individuals of intermediate character bulk far more prominently than “pure” representatives of the Nordic and the Alpine complex.

These two races, then, are not so much realities coming under our direct observation as they are concepts by means of which the anthropologist can more or less satisfactorily describe much of the extant population of Europe. By assuming that at one time there existed a distinct Teutonic and a distinct Alpine stock, which mixed in varying degree in different parts of Europe, we are able to give a fairly consistent account of the regional differences of the European type. Tall, fair and long-skulled individuals occur most abundantly in Scandinavia and the British Isles, the percentage attaining a maximum in Sweden, where over ten per cent of the total population still conforms to the Nordic type. Southwards its representatives decrease in relative numbers, finally dwindling down to an inconsiderable fraction of the whole people. Thus, comparing the Swedes with the peasants of central France, we find that while a man of five feet, seven inches, ranks as tall among the latter, the net height of nearly sixty per cent of all Swedes is in excess of that height; while the fair hair and long heads prevailing among the Scandinavians are correspondingly rare in the French group.

Of this dwindling of Nordic traits as one departs from the Scandinavian centre, Germany furnishes a striking example. The physical differences noted in our German *Verein* are not by any means freakish, but follow a fairly definite geographical law. It is the Mecklenburger and his immediate neighbours who are almost indistinguishable from the Scandinavian; it is the native of the Black Forest who resembles the peasant of central France. This regional difference persists in spite of all the modern conditions so favourable to migration and interbreeding. Applying the useful symbols of an Alpine and a Nordic race, we can readily interpret the observed

phenomena. If, for example, the Mecklenburger proves to be a little shorter and broader-skulled than the Swede, we can explain his departure from the Teutonic norm by a slight infusion of Alpine blood. If the Tyrolese towers above his broad-headed neighbours, a Nordic strain will account for the anomaly.

A corresponding local analysis can be made of the French, and the final result of both studies would lend greater precision to our initial comparison of the two national groups. It is not merely certain Frenchmen and certain Germans, but the French of Normandy and the Germans of Mecklenburg that belong together, while the Breton is similarly united with the Badenser rather than with his Norman compatriot. The Teutonic category includes the French-speaking Norman and quite as definitely excludes the German-speaking inhabitant of the Black Forest.

So far, all is smooth sailing. But it is otherwise when we turn from the study of bodily traits to a comparison of races in the matter of psychology. There is a widespread belief that with racial differences as to outward appearance there are associated profound differences, equally hereditary, in intellectual capacity and ethical outlook. Thus, during the war, some Allied propagandists, ignoring the simple fact that the German people did not represent a racial unit, attempted to prove that the atrocities of the German soldiers were the necessary result of their organic constitution; that they were as ferocious during the war as they had been in the days of the Caesars and as they are bound to be to the end of time. Others—and there were scientists among them—showed to their own satisfaction that the Germans were by nature altogether debarred from creative effort. These views, resting, of course, on sheer ignorance, can be briefly dismissed; for the Germans are not a race, and therefore no hereditary traits whatsoever can be ascribed to them as a group. If such qualities as brutality and imitativeness are ascribed to the Nordic racial strain, then they must be at least equally characteristic of the Nordics of the United Kingdom and Scandinavia. If, on the other hand, all their deficiency is due to the Alpine alloy, then the very same shortcomings must be expected of the natives of Central France. In a word, the question whether Germans are innately inferior to English or French is scientifically meaningless; there can be question only of the comparative merits of the Nordic and the Alpine race.

As a matter of fact, some of our recent controversialists possessed a sufficient smattering of anthropological knowledge to formulate the problem in these terms. It is interesting to note that the most prominent, certainly the most vociferous, combatants on both sides were agreed in one point—the vast superiority of the Nordic. When German chauvinists proclaimed the glories of their civilization as a distinctively Nordic product, their English-speaking opponents did not challenge the basic assumption of Nordic supremacy, but contented themselves with showing, correctly enough, that the Nordic airs put on by the Germans were absurd since so large a proportion of Germans are of Alpine blood. This is, of course, a neat dialectic thrust, but it fails to touch the core of the problem.

What, then, is the evidence for the greater worth of the Nordic? This question can be answered briefly but fairly, that it is precisely *nil*. No more exhilarating source of innocent merriment exists than the literature of the school headed by Count Gobineau and Mr. Houston Stewart Chamberlain. All the great men of European history are passed in review by these gentlemen and, with complete assurance, are solemnly pronounced to be one and all of Nordic stock; at least, by a miraculous intuition all their desirable traits are assigned to Nordic heritage. Do actual measurements make Bismarck a broad-head? If they do, then of course the measurements must be wrong: “our great Bismarck” must assuredly have had a long head. Richard Wagner’s diminutive frame is obviously the dire result of interbreeding with Alpines; his genius must be an unadulterated creation of Nordic germ-plasm.

Quite apart from such palpable absurdities, this Gobineau-Chamberlain theory is objectionable from every possible angle. In the first place, while modern science does not dogmatically proclaim the equality of all races, the differences between any two of them are certainly far less than is popularly assumed. Indeed, it can be stated quite definitely that no satisfactory proof has yet been furnished that the European is by native endowment superior to the Malay or the Negro. Until such proof is offered, the assumption of a vast hereditary difference between Nordic and Alpine European has not the slightest plausibility. Secondly, it would be interesting to know on what grounds any specific psychological traits are ascribed to the Nordic race. Intellectual and spiritual capacities are not so readily measured as are the

colour of hair or skin; nor is it easy in appraising them to disengage the acquired from the natural factors.

But difficult as the problem is, it becomes insoluble when we recall that nowhere nowadays, certainly nowhere in Germany, do we find a large group from which we can be certain that Alpine influences are wholly excluded. As the eugenist Schallmayer remarks, there is probably in the whole of Germany not a single individual of purely Nordic descent. In other words, we can not isolate a pure Nordic group from a pure Alpine group and compare their respective mental characteristics. For a rough classification, these ideal concepts do very well, but they are quite inadequate for so delicate a psychological inquiry. Assuming, then, for the sake of argument, that the Nordic stock originally possessed a distinctive psyche, how are we to ascertain its characteristics to-day? We can determine only what mental traits are combined with the relatively purest physical complex that gave rise to the concept of the Nordic type. But, apart from the technical difficulties of establishing the higher qualities of imagination, reasoning power and spiritual faculties, there is nothing in the law of heredity to prevent a Nordic physique from being again and again associated with an Alpine mentality, and vice versa. Nordic mentality, an improbable a priori notion, thus passes into the realm of the unknowable. The Nordic concept is an abstraction based on physical data, and to transfer it to the psychological sphere can lead only to disastrous results.

There would be a semblance of plausibility in the contentions of the Chamberlainists, if populations preponderantly Teutonic exhibited any marked superiority over Alpine groups living under generally similar social conditions. But this test is a lamentable failure. It is a notorious fact that the South Germans contributed rather more than their proportional share to the roster of great Germans. An excellent case in point is provided by the history of the Walloons in Sweden. These people are descendants of Belgian blacksmiths who settled in Sweden in the seventeenth century; for a long period intermarried exclusively among themselves, and only in recent years have come to mingle in some measure with the Swedes. With their dark skin and hair these immigrants present a marked contrast to their fair-haired hosts. Yet this handful of Alpine intruders hold their own among the purest Nordic population of the world. Professor Retzius, who can not be accused of an anti-Nordic bias, not only gives these Walloons an excellent

civic character but points out that a number of them have risen to eminence in science and in public life.

But of course reasoned argument is of no avail against the race-enthusiast, because at bottom nothing interests him less than the dispassionate quest of truth. As some of his guild candidly avow, the cult of their race is not for them a matter to be rationally discussed, it is a full-fledged faith embodying their dearest ideal values. They thus present to the critical anthropologist the impregnable front of religious fanatics for whom the worship of the Nordic fills the emotional void left by the decay of older creeds. Viewing the situation from this angle, the scientist might well turn his back upon it, for it is by no means his function to prove to any group of devotees that their values are not values—to themselves. "Religious opinions," says Ernst Mach, the wisest spokesman of modern science, "remain each man's most individual private affair so long as he does not obtrude them on others and transfer them to matters belonging before a different forum."

So long as he does not obtrude them on others, there's the rub: it is the Teutonomaniac's propagandist activity that rouses scientific hostility. For unlike Yum-Yum he is not content to thrill with rapture at the contemplation of his own transcendent loveliness. His is a faith less tolerant than that of Islam, for its aim is not the conversion but the damnation of the infidel; salvation is only by predestination, by the divine right of Nordic lineage. It is because the follower of Gobineau, like all bigots, contends that *his* values represent absolute values to be recognized alike by Nordic and non-Nordic, because by a quasi-scientific theodicy he tries to sublimate his individual belief into an objective standard that the scientist is compelled to take up arms against him. The scientist will do so without venom against the honest enthusiasts among his opponents but also without fear of wounding their sensibilities, for the matter is too important to permit an excess of delicacy. The scientist will not dogmatize as to racial equality when not even the foundation has been laid for an accurate determination of the higher racial capacities. He will simply point out again and again, calmly and authoritatively, that in the light of present knowledge nothing warrants the idolatry of whatever bit of reality may lurk behind that concept of a "Nordic race" which for purposes of classifying human groups by their physical traits is of some use and convenience to anthropological science.

R. H. L. 3. xi. 20.

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# JOHN REED

JOHN REBD, American poet, died, a communist, in Moscow, the capital of the future State, of the disease of the revolutionary present: typhus; he was bitten by a sick louse, a doomed parasite.

Jack could have made a song of that, a laughing song, in the days when he sang and laughed. He was a joyous spirit then; I tried to keep him glad. His father asked me to. Jack's father was my friend, and a brilliant man he was; a wit. He was the leading spirit of the leading club of Portland, Oregon; and he played himself, as he wished his boy to play, till he was bitten, as the boy was, by those same deadly, dying things.

Francis J. Heney came to Oregon, prosecuting timber-frauds, seeking with William J. Burns for the proofs of the process by which our forests fell into private hands. The evidence reached up among the commanding men of Oregon, and they controlled, among other things, the machinery of the law. Their U. S. Marshal picked the juries. Heney asked Reed—Jack's father—to be U. S. Marshal and so see that the panels were free and fair. Reed laughed. He guessed what it meant to him, but he took the job; and he did the job. There were convictions and there were hates. Reed's club hated Reed, who faced the hate and bit it with his wit. He had a tongue, as Jack had. It is a story of breed I'm telling.

One day, several years after the timber-fraud scandal, ex-U. S. Marshal Reed invited me to his club. He led me into the main dining-room up to the centre table where "the crowd" lunched. It was the noon-hour; most of the crowd were there.

"There they are," said Reed to me, but for them to hear. "That's the crowd that got the timber and tried to get me. And there, at the head of the table, that vacant chair, that's my place. That's where I sat. That's where I stood them off, for fun for years, and then for months in deadly earnest; but gaily, always gaily. I haven't sat in that place since the day I rose and left it, saying I'd never come back to it and saying that I would like to see which one of them would have the nerve to think that he could take and hold and

fill my place. I have heard, and I am glad to see, that it is vacant yet, my vacant chair."

That was Jack Reed's father: tall, handsome, audacious and a wit; a gay and, later, a bitten, bitter wit. He told me about his boy at Harvard and he asked me "to look out for Jack" when he came out of college into life in New York.

"He is a gay spirit," the father said, "a joyous thing. Keep him so. He is a poet, I think; keep him singing. Let him see everything, but don't—don't let him get like me."

I couldn't. I tried, and not for his father's sake only. When John Reed came, big and growing, handsome outside and beautiful inside, when that boy came down from Cambridge to New York, it seemed to me that I had never seen anything so near to pure joy. No ray of sunshine, no drop of foam, no young animal, bird or fish, and no star, was as happy as that boy was. If only we could keep him so, we might have a poet at last who would see and sing nothing but joy. Convictions were what I was afraid of. I tried to steer him away from convictions, that he might play; that he might play with life; and see it all, love it all, live it all; tell it all; that he might be it all; but all, not any one thing. And why not? A poet is more revolutionary than any radical. Great days they were, or rather nights, when the boy would bang home late and wake me up to tell me what he had been and seen that day; the most wonderful thing in the world. Yes. Each night he had been and seen the most wonderful thing in the world.

He wrote some of those things. He became all of those things. He fell head over heels in love with every single one of those most wonderful things: with his job; with his friends; with labour; with girls; with strikes; with the I. W. W.; with socialism; with the anarchists; with the bums in the Bowery; with the theatre; with God and Man and Being. I pulled him out of each such love-affair anxiously at first, but so easily and so often that I soon felt he was safe. I thought I could trust the next most wonderful thing to save him from the last most wonderful thing, so I went off on a long journey, to Mexico. So did Jack, but Jack went, as a poet, to Villa, the bandit, while I went, as U. S. Marshal Reed would have gone, to Carranza's side.

I don't know just what it was that finally caught and took the joy of this poet and turned him into a poem. He loved a girl, one girl, but Louise is a

poet, too, and a vagabond, or she was when she left here in boy's clothes last summer to follow Jack to Russia. And he loved the I. W. W. faithfully and the Red Left of the Socialist party, and, like his father, he hated hate and—all that. I really think it was in the breed. Anyhow, he got a conviction and so, the revolutionary spirit got him. He became a fighter; out for a cause; a revolutionist at home here, and in Russia a communist. He didn't smile any more.

A friend of his and of mine, who travelled, and worked with Jack in Russia last summer said that Jack was "like the other communists in there": he was hard, intolerant, ruthless, clinched for the fight. I could see that Jack had hurt our friend who, having said this, brooded a moment. But then said his friend:

"I wish I could be a communist."

You see, in Moscow, in Soviet Russia, where there are lice and hunger and discipline and death; where it is hell now; they see—even a non-communist can see something to live or to die for. They can see that life isn't always going to be as it is now. The future is coming; it is in sight; it is coming, really and truly coming, and soon. And it is good. They can see this with their naked eyes, common men can; I did, for example. So, to a poet, to a spirit like Jack Reed, the communist, death in Moscow must have been a vision of the resurrection and the life of Man.

L. S. 3. xi. 20.

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## THE PYGMY AND THE HEIGHTS

IT is a common epigram that to be a mountaineer one must have a strong back and a weak mind. But quite aside from the fact that the risk which a skilled mountaineer takes is seldom greater than the risk which is taken when one drives one's motor-car fifty miles an hour, it is by no means demonstrable that it is foolish to risk one's life. At the worst, mountaineers are voluntary climbers, and risk nobody's life but their own. There is a great deal of talk—but very little practice—about hazarding one's life for a principle. Thus the soldier on the battlefield is persuaded that he takes a sacrificial risk for "democracy," and though he gets very little pleasure out of it, nobody calls him a fool—or not with impunity. But let the

mountaineer risk his life for one of the most exalted pleasures known to man, the intoxication of the imagination, and behold the dwellers in the plain rise in mass and call him foolish. But only the mountaineer knows anything about the wild delights into which he climbs, or has ever heard the siren-whispers of the peak. Nobody else, therefore, is competent to pass judgment upon his wisdom or his folly. It is enough that for him the reward is worth the risk; and, after all, who else is concerned?

A snow-capped mountain, seen from afar, rising from the plain and the blue foothills which surround it, and hanging like a dream against the sky, is a beautiful thing. One comes to love it, to turn toward it every day. Japan has made a holy place of Fuji, and the people of Portland, Oregon, are only a little less worshipful of Mount Hood, speaking of it with pantheistic affection. The beauty of a snow-peak, however, increases as you approach it, and familiarity with a great mountain breeds awe and humility and challenges those unknown reserves of human power which William James used to talk about. It puts the pygmy in his place—and then it rewards him with a new feeling of self-respect.

One of the finest mountaineers I know, six-feet-one of hardened steel muscle, with a resourceful technique that never fails him, once stood beside me above the last tortured tree at timber-line and looked up beyond the spines of naked lava and the vast inclines of glittering snow, to the ice-hung precipices of the summit-crag sharply outlined against the pink dawn-sky, and drawing a deep breath, he murmured passionately: “It’s so big. . . . My God, it’s so big!”

An hour later we were roped together, and out on the first traverse, and he was cutting every step we took from sun-up till one o’clock, in order to conquer that bigness.

Were you ever out on a wide traverse far up on the side of a great snow-mountain? Don’t talk of foolishness unless you have been! Bound to a few of your fellow-pygmies by the slender thread of an alpine rope, with nothing but your alpenstock driven into the snow and the spikes in your boots set into the tiny, chopped-out steps to give you a hold on the perilous incline, you look up and up a narrowing chute of white to the summit-pinnacles, and you look down and down upon a great field of white tilted at an angle of forty, fifty, sixty degrees, dropping away from you for five thousand feet into the bottomless cavern of the cañon! Even the summit

itself is less thrilling, for though the height is so much the greater, there is no vast snow-field towering above.

Across the traverse, you climb perhaps one hundred, two hundred, three hundred feet at an angle so close to the perpendicular that it is only just possible to conquer it by cutting each step in the snow or in the blue glacial ice, and thus attain a spine that leads you toward the peak. It is hard, monotonous work, and your eyes burn despite your goggles, with the snow-glare so close to your face. But wait till you hit that same spot on the descent! You do not, of course, descend forwards, but neither do you descend backwards, as you would come down a ladder. You stand with your left side to the wall, drive in your stock, and swing your left foot behind the right, down to the next step, immediately sinking the right foot to the step below that. Then you brace yourself, extract your stock, and drive it home again two steps lower down.

Once you have mastered the rhythm of this method, you can descend an almost precipitous snow-wall, using the stairway of steps which you made in the early morning, with approximate rapidity. But each time that you swing down your left foot behind your right, you look between your arms, as your hands grasp the alpenstock, to see where your foot is going, and in that glimpse you see not only the step for your foot, but the top of the head of the man below you, and beneath him, it may be, the bottom of the snow-field, or perhaps the great hole of the cañon thousands of feet below. You are a crawling fly on the side wall of tremendousness, yet a fly who has willed, and dared, and conquered. There is no sensation quite like it.

Or only one. That is the sensation which comes to you after you have crossed the traverse on the return, when the low sun is sending long blue shadows from the lava spines out across the glacial slopes, and you turn and look upon the track of your ascent. It goes back from your heels, a tiny dotted line across the great incline of white, and then shoots straight up the mountainside, till near the top it runs into a shadow that shades the slope, and then the tracks seem to your deceived vision actually to curve outward as well as upward! You have accomplished the impossible, you have defied the law of gravitation! How infinitesimal those tracks now appear across the great traverse and up the shoulder, yet each one was cut with your ax and broadened by the tread of your boots. No steps, perhaps, were ever there before. To-morrow’s sun will see that no steps remain. But for one glorious,

memorable day you have scaled the heights of immensity and left your mark on the sky-borne, eternal snows.

Let him talk of the folly of climbing who has climbed—if any climber can be found to do it. But let all others be silent.

W. P. E. 5. x. 21.

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## VINCENT D'INDY

THE visits to America, in one season, of the foremost living composers of Germany and of France—Richard Strauss and Vincent d'lndy—irresistibly suggest certain comparisons between the musical arts of the two countries, as enlightening as they are paradoxical. A plausible case could be made for the theory that modern Germany and France, like two chemicals in a reaction, have exchanged elements, and reversed each other's character. Thus the realistic movement, or "programme music" as it is more frequently called, beginning in France with Berlioz, passed through Liszt into Germany, where it finds its greatest contemporary representative in Strauss. During this same period, moreover, while "tone painting" was thus being transmitted from the naturally literary and dramatic French to the more subjective and emotional Germans, the other type of music, which, to distinguish it from the outward-looking art of the scene-painter, we may call "inward-looking" or "pure" music—this older type, born in the land of *innigkeit* and so gloriously nurtured by Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Brahms, crossed the Rhine in the other direction, established itself in Paris though the labours of the half-Teutonic Belgian, Cesar Franck, and now finds possibly its most eloquent living representative in the highly Gallic Vincent d'Indy. Thus, while the symphonic poem, born in France, was reaching a resplendent maturity in Germany, its older brother, the symphony, had quietly emigrated from its native land and was enjoying in France a new lease of unexpected life.

As long ago as 1905, M. Romain Rolland clearly described these tendencies.

German music [he wrote], is daily losing its intimate spirit; there are still traces of this spirit in Wolf, thanks to his exceptionally unhappy life; but there is very little of it in Mahler, in spite of all his

efforts to concentrate his mind on himself; and there is hardly any at all in Strauss, although he is the most interesting of the three composers. German composers have no longer any depth.

In the sixteen years since these words were written their truth has been strikingly corroborated by the career of Strauss. He has become constantly more brilliantly external. In his early works, brilliant externality gave place to moments at least of introspection and pure beauty. In “Death and Transfiguration,” despite its cruel realism in the depiction of the death-struggle, the panting for breath, the intolerable tension of pain, there is the sweet innocence of the childhood music, there is the grandeur of the theme of transfiguration. In “Till Eulenspiegel” the literal episodes in the life of the ingratiating rogue which make the body of the work, are idealized and grasped in their essential human spirit in the prologue and epilogue, in which, as in the last of Schumann’s “Childhood Scenes,” “the poet speaks.” Even in the “Sinfonia Domestica” there is the magnificently imaginative treatment of the Husband-theme to offset the puerile futilities of the squalling baby, as in the “Hero’s Life” there is the love music to make up for those silly “Adversaries.” But from about the time of the “Hero’s Life” the tendency towards literal scene-painting, towards a crass and vulgar materialism, which Mr. Ernest Newman has so skilfully analysed, gained steadily on the better elements in Strauss, until we have the *reductio ad absurdum* of his method in the “Alpine Symphony,” with its sorry inanities of stage-carpentered sunrises, “real” cowbells and imitation thunder, unredeemed by any true emotional penetration of the sentiment of mountains. In his work, with its extravagant luxury of means, its pathetic spiritual poverty, Strauss is at last pitilessly revealed as, in Mr. Paul Rosenfeld’s phrase, “the false dawn of modern music.”

But is the true dawn to be found any more in France than in Germany? M. Rolland thought in 1905 that it was.

At this German music festival [he said], it was a Frenchman [César Franck] who represented not only serious music moulded in a classical form, but a religious spirit. The characters of two nations have been reversed. The Germans have so changed that they are only able to appreciate this seriousness and religious faith with difficulty. I watched the audience on this occasion; they listened politely, a little astonished and bored, as if to say, “What business has this Frenchman with depth and piety of soul?” . . . It was only the other day that German music enjoyed the privilege of boring us in France.

If M. Rolland were writing to-day he would probably be obliged to admit that the Franckists now “enjoy the privilege of boring” not only the Germans, but many of their compatriots; and this would be an admission damaging not to the Franckists but to modern French taste.

Have not France and the rest of Europe, in fact, the false emphasis of war-propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding, been about as much debased as Germany itself by the materialism, growing ever more mad for thirty years before 1914, that was the true cause of the war? Modern France would seem, to an unprejudiced observer, as would modern America for that matter, about as materialistic as modern Germany. To such an observer, Franckism appears, unfortunately, as only an oasis of vitalism in a desert of materialism and its by-products, a small group inspired by faith outclamoured by a disillusioned herd. Of the three other groups in clique-ridden France which struggle with this forlorn hope for supremacy, each bears the mark clearly enough of our world-wide modern materialism, either in fulfilment of it or in reaction against it. The impressionism of which Debussy was the leader was in part a wholesome revolt against the megalomania of Strauss, Mahler and Reger, an assertion eminently Gallic of the superiority of quality to quantity, of distinction to size, of refinement to brute force. But it was also, less happily, with its emphasis on sensuous charm, its retirement to the ivory tower, a confession of the spiritual exhaustion which materialism brings in its train. Debussy has been especially successful “in his appeal to the modern preference of sensation to thought and emotion, of subjective day-dreaming to the impersonal perception of beauty.” In these preferences he has, of course, many more sympathizers in contemporary France than has d’Indy in his austerer ideal of thought and emotion embodied in objective beauty.

The fatigue of modern life has led to another kind of reaction in the reversion to barbaric stimuli of modern primitives like Stravinsky, Schmitt and the other devotees of dance-rhythms and the pantomime. Exhausted nerves, minds rendered incapable, by the distractions and useless complications of our machinery, of concentrating themselves upon the syntheses of sensation that are required by genuine art, fall back on the crude sensations themselves. It is strange and somewhat repulsive to see European musicians, with long and intensive culture behind them, at the behest of tired nerves throwing it all away and acclaiming American rag-

time, the sweepings of our streets, as the rejuvenator of their senile art. Even stranger is the arid intellectualism that in those whose emotions are dead, or never lived, gives birth to all manner of fads and fashions based upon formulae. Those who, like Erik Satie and the "Six" who just now make so much talk in Paris, try to substitute process and idiom for the living instincts out of which alone real art is made, are another kind of victims of materialism, victims of its languor, its ennui and disillusion, breeding irony, self-consciousness and unwillingness to risk a loyalty. . . . No, modern France is not a good place for a vitalist. It is a wilderness of impressionism, barbarism, and intellectualism. Vincent d'Indy is a voice crying in that wilderness, and his cry is: *"Il n'est vraiment, en art, que le cœur pour engendrer de la beauté."* At seventy, despite his imposing reputation, which few trouble to understand, and surrounded as he is by a small group of friends more of whom are sentimental idolators than intelligent supporters, and by many enemies (for he is a well-hated man), Vincent d'Indy is perhaps more alone than ever. Yet there is power in that solitude, for he has with him the truth. *"Il n'est que le cœur pour engendrer de la beauté."*

Born in Paris in 1851 of an aristocratic and strongly Roman Catholic family, Vincent d'Indy became a pupil of César Franck in 1873, and through the Société Nationale of which he became president after Franck's death in 1890, and the Schola Cantorum, a music school strongly impregnated with the principles of plain chant, which he founded with Alexander Guilmant and Charles Bordes in 1896, has done more than any other one man to disseminate the Franck spirit, both in creation and in education. Among his works are three symphonies and the beautiful programme symphony "A Summer Day on the Mountain," "Istar: Symphonic Variations," and several smaller orchestral works; for chamber music, a violin sonata, and two string quartettes; the cantata "Chant de la Cloche"; and three works for the stage, "Fervaal," "L'Etranger," and "La Legende de St. Christophe," the latter, a *"drame sacré"* occupying in his work somewhat the position that "Parsifal" does in Wagner's. D'Indy has been indefatigable also as a teacher, conductor, editor, and writer. His best-known books are his life of César Franck and his monumental treatise, "Cours de Composition Musicale," not yet completed.

It is interesting to compare his programme symphony, "A Summer Day on the Mountain," with Strauss's "Alpine Symphony." The French master,

who is a devout lover of mountains, whether his own Cévennes where he spends his summers in the province of Ardèche or the larger and more famous range of which he can see Mt. Blanc from the window of his study on a clear day, contents himself with comparatively few suggestions of external nature. In the first movement, “Dawn,” there is the empty blankness of the mist before sunrise, the twittering of birds, the gradually increasing light and animation suggested by changes of key and rhythm, the final gorgeous appearance of the sun in a blaze of B major. In the second movement, “Day—Afternoon Under the Pines” we have almost no tone-painting, but rather an unforgettable evocation of the mood of the scene and place. Then come realistic suggestions of a peasant’s song in the valley, and later a sort of marching theme—perhaps a regiment going by. In the last movement, “Evening,” there is first the animation of full day; then gradually an abatement, an almost imperceptible darkening and saddening, and a lovely melody that is like a song as one goes home at evening, a song profoundly characteristic of d’Indy, full of happy serenity and devout thankfulness. Then gradually the shades descend, the passages early in the symphony suggestive of mist and half-light recur, there is faint clashing of chimes in the distance, and after the song of thankfulness has been sung once more a heavenly passage made from a variant of the theme of full day, in which all is calmed and quieted to the mood of dusk. It is hard to listen to such a passage without tears; for it is not sticks and stones that it gives us, but the very accent of what this beauty of the darkening day means to a responsive spirit.

In M. d’Indy’s latest orchestral work, “Poëme des Rivages,” there are four movements, suggested by scenes in Italy during a recent tour. The first movement, “Calme et Lumière,” begins with a wide and spacious scheme not unlike that of the opening of the “Summer Day on the Mountain.” There is considerable development and an exciting climax with suggestion of a storm; but the most individual feature is a theme suggesting “human nature,” as the composer puts it, that is, summing up the human response to the scene. The second and third movements are briefer and more sketch-like; one inspired by an intensely blue sea seen downward through trees; the other, a *scherzo*, recording an impression of intensely green sea and sky, seen from a train on the coast of the Adriatic. Curious passages for bassoon, English horn, oboe, and clarinet solos, in their highest registers, depict this

rarefied green. The last movement, “Mystère de l’Ocean,” is the most individual and impressive. The saxophone, an instrument of which M. d’Indy has grown very fond in recent years, has an important part in establishing the proper impersonal tone at the start. Later in the movement many earlier themes, including the “human nature,” recur.

For all his solitude in a Paris largely given to fads and fashions, and to the pursuit of what is called “originality,” Vincent d’Indy impresses one as tranquil and content. He has the French knack of discounting enmity by understanding it, and even by ironically rallying it. In his “Legende de St. Christophe,” there is an amusing scene wherein are introduced in succession “Les Faux Penseurs,” “Les Faux Savants,” “Une Foule Nombreuse et Burlante,” “Les Arrivistes Orgueilleux,” and “Les Faux Artistes.” The False Artists proclaim and condemn themselves as follows:

> Falsifiers of an art fine and rare,
> We make the fashion, and we follow it.
> Let everything be pulled down to our stature.
> Hatred to enthusiasm!
> Hatred to ideal art!
> No more rules! No more study!
> Let us be little, let us be original.

Better still than irony, however, is the calm religious faith, the genuinely Christian confidence in all that is permanent and good in human life, that sustains this priest of beauty and love in a modern world so largely given over to ugliness and hatred. As one talks with d’Indy about the eccentricities and perversities that make up so much of our modern artistic activity, one gradually loses the hatred of them that comes from fear, one catches a little of his tolerance and quizzical amusement, one goes back as he has done to Bach, Beethoven, Franck, that august stream of beauty which comes down through ages, washing away with it so much temporary jetsam too flimsily made, and one finally remembers only a sentence that one heard from him twenty years ago, and that obviously sustains him now in his old age as it armed him then in the struggles of his prime: “*Les principes d’art sont eternelles; ils restent.*”

D. G. M. 23. xi. 21.

# THE DEATH OF BASHKIN

*Translated by George E. Haendelman*

I AM only thirty years old, but when I look back, it seems to me that I have passed through an immense cemetery and have seen nothing but graves and crosses. Sooner or later a fresh grave appears somewhere and no matter with what kind of monument it be marked, a plain cross or a granite column, it is the same—this is all that will be left of me. In the end this is not even important: immortality is a tedious thing, and life itself is of little interest. The worst is that death is terrible; you will not resolve to consign yourself to the devil with your own hands; you will prefer rather to continue to live long, to wander through this cemetery which is called life; and around you, endlessly arising, you will see new crosses. Everything that is loved, everything beautiful will remain behind, everything dear to the heart will fall away, like autumn leaves, and you will stagger in at the end alone, like an orphan.

And now Bashkin has died too—one more of those with whom I embarked upon my literary career has passed away.

Yet he did well to die. There was so little of happiness in his life that it would not suffice the most humdrum peasant even for a single day. The time has long since passed when literature was the repository of all virtue. From every crevice there has crept into our little world so much trash, it has come to be such a stock-exchange, such a brothel, that a modest, quiet man like Bashkin feels himself as fit for it as a violet thrown into the dust of a market-square. Perhaps, in times past, his pensively tender talent and the soft beauty of his soul would have been appraised differently, but to-day, upon the broad highway of literature, amidst the hustle and bustle of buying and selling, in the cunningly interwoven struggle of intrigue and advertisement, what are needed are strong hands, a robust mind, a cruel heart. Nothing of this had Bashkin, and he lived in penury and in hiding, like one hunted; denying himself, till he died, as befits a Russian writer, of consumption.

Very few knew of him; the name of Bashkin will not occupy a foremost place in literature. His talent was not great; his whole beauty consisted in his sweet, modest, fine personality—sincere to the depths of his soul. These

personal qualities were reflected in his writings like a blue sky in clear water, and they imparted to his small talent a rare, pensive beauty.

Some day, if I ever fulfil one of my desires—to leave a broad canvas of the lives of those whom fate has decreed shall be the salt of the earth, hunters of men who have turned the temple of literature into a den of petty scoundrels—I will create in a novel a type like Bashkin, which shall be true to that bright memory which I have retained of him. Just now his face is still too near; trivial recollections shimmer before my eyes too vividly. Especially clear three pictures stand before me, three moments of his death and funeral, which I can not yet generalize.

I had not seen Bashkin for about a year. The same disease in us both had sent us apart in different directions. Only a day before his death we saw each other for the last time. When I entered the room, Bashkin was asleep; he was under the influence of morphine, a strange and terrifying sleep. Some one held a candle, and the yellow light moved in blotches upon the ceiling and the walls which were covered with a strangely patterned wallpaper. Why does a trifling detail strike us so forcibly at certain times? I remember that I glanced with a painful feeling upon this wall-paper; in its strange and coarse lines one perceived the figures of guitars, and for some reason it seemed unpleasant and even disgusting to think that they had never played. . . . As the light crept stealthily along the walls, the guitars stretched their thin, drawn necks, and upon the bed, rattling and whistling, heaved the breast of the man who at this moment was struggling with terrible force somewhere on the border-line between life and death. Perhaps it was the death agony, and Bashkin might have died if we had not wakened him. At first, when he opened his eyes, he was evidently wholly unconscious. Strange and terrifying was the gaze of those eyes, directed straight upon me, as if regarding me from somewhere terribly far off.

“Vassili Vassilievitch,” I cried.

Suddenly his look changed. It was as if something dreadful and incomprehensible vanished at the sound of my voice. The familiar expression of tenderness and greeting appeared upon the half dead face, and the invalid stretched himself toward me. I bent down and kissed him. Suddenly Bashkin encircled my head, pressed it to his breast, in which something wheezed, bubbled and beat, and began to stroke my head softly,

tenderly, like a mother her child. Silently, as though with great love, and as though with tender sorrow, and as if imploring me to protect and save him.

It is strange that I who met Bashkin upon the appearance of his first story, and have been helping him all his life as his oldest protector and patron, should have felt myself so small, and puny, and weak, as I heard that dull wheezing and beating in his breast and felt his hand sliding feebly along my hair.

Not from the day of birth but from the nearness to death should we count the age of a person. What Bashkin knew at that moment, what he suffered, I shall not soon learn. Before that last wisdom of a great love and pity, which death imparted to Bashkin, as he lay there before me, how insignificant and comic were my fame, my name and my God.

There was a time when I often argued with Bashkin. We lived together for many years, and as the stronger one I pressed upon him with my authority. Now the time had come to strike a balance. One of us had reached the last page of his life, and I asked him with dread curiosity: “Well, how now, Vassili Vassilievitch, are we agreed or are we still further separated in our views?”

Bashkin, without smiling, with his bright, kind eyes looked me straight in the face. “Separated!” said he. “We must love and pity all.”

Perhaps, maybe he is right. I do not know. . . .

But what else besides anger and hatred could I have had in my soul as we followed Bashkin’s coffin to the grave? How scant were the followers! In the midst of that immense white field, knee deep in snow, swept by a hurricane, how small and pitiful we must have appeared. In front of us the white coffin moved slowly, the storm tore at the two or three coloured ribbons on the wreaths; nothing was visible all around save the white field and the endlessly whirling white snow. I trod behind the coffin, stumbling through the snow, and for the hundredth time read the inscription upon a wreath: “To our beloved father and husband from his wife and son.” It was a small and pitiful wreath, and the inscription was not on a ribbon, but on a piece of tin, such as is nailed to crosses in the poorest cemeteries.

As I read the inscription, I thought of the two hundred roubles that I had in my pocket, which I had collected with the greatest difficulty for the survivors of Bashkin’s family. I thought of Bashkin’s wife who did not yet know of his death; I thought of her giving birth upon almost the same day

that he had died; I thought also of what his “wife and son” were going to do now. I thought also that after all this was the “funeral of an author,” and, by God, it seemed strange at that moment to ask love and pity of me for those millions of shop-keepers, lords of life, beasts and blackguards, who mumbled something, growling and thundering in the belly of the great city, which was vaguely outlined on the edge of the horizon, behind the canopy of the ceaseless storm.

May they be all thrice damned!

Yet from this funeral something bright remained in the soul. Why bright, when in reality—nonsense, it is a mere trifle and purely accidental—I do not know, still something was left.

While we were lowering the coffin into the grave that had been dug in a peasants’ cemetery, the storm ceased. Suddenly it was a bright, white, clear winter day, smelling with frost. The crosses stood around dressed in round, white fluffy hats. A flock of pigeons descended upon the grave from God knows where. Fluttering their wings, the birds circled round us. One tried his utmost to alight upon the coffin, and turning aside, flew down to perch upon the nearest cross. It was beautiful.

Perhaps the justification of the whole universe is in beauty? Perhaps everything exists only that there may be beauty?

The beauty of pigeons, of a white winter day, a white coffin, soft snow, quiet sorrow, the beauty of the dead, tender soul of Bashkin.

M. A. 22. ii. 22.

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## THE DRUNKARD’S CHILD

THE striking social transformation of my time was a natural result of the decay of drunkenness. It was a hideous thing, this unromantic drunkenness of an American industrial population cooped up in a big city and rushing from the despotism of the factory-foreman to the hospitality of the bartender. This drunkenness had nothing in common with the merry sprees of Falstaff or the religious intoxication one finds in Greek tragedy. How vividly still I recall the sensation created during the Hayes Administration in the circles among which my lot was cast, by the announcement that beer, whisky and wine had been banished from the White House table! This

eccentricity threw a cloud over the Administration. I judge from what I saw and heard about me. I was then nine.

An historian of the American people, dealing with his subject in the manner of Green, would not create the proper atmosphere if he failed to make liquor his background while reviewing this period. Indeed, I do not see how the historian will collect his material when he comes to deal with the drunkenness of those days. All the pictures of it are distorted. The facts are supposed to be available in the literature of prohibition, in the records of the police courts, in the memoirs of all foes of the Demon Rum. Now, this Demon Rum, with whom as a child I was brought up, must not be conceived as a hideous and devouring monster. That picture of the drunkard's child—how ridiculous it is! The drunkard's child in those days was as often as not better clad and better fed than the child of the total abstainer. The drunkard's child was the object of a universal sympathy. Shoes were bought for him by everybody. Allowances were made for his shortcomings. If his mother could not pay her rent, she had but to mention the fact and the sum was supplied by total abstainers, who did not advertise their charity in the newspapers.

There is a theory, originating with the temperance-advocates, that a drunkard neglected his family, lost his earning-power and wound up in the gutter. This impression is too conventionalized. Exceptions are assumed to have been the rule. In all my experience of drunkards when I was a boy—and nearly all the homes to which I then had access were drunkards' homes—I can recall none which did not contain comforts and in some cases luxuries; a piano, perhaps, or a little library of books or an equipment of queer clocks under glass domes. I think I am correct in the assertion that a great majority of the intimate friends of my mother were the wives of drunkards—the period comprised the whole of the Administrations of Presidents Hayes, Garfield and Arthur—and the home of every one of these women had a parlour, well swept and brightly carpeted.

The notion that a drunkard's home was mean and dirty may be set beside that other odd belief that a drunkard sometimes came home and beat his wife. Anyone with the least practical experience of drunkards knows that such men are easily knocked down when they are in liquor. Many a time, as a mere boy, I have knocked a man down when he was drunk. When a man is drunk he is likely to move in a series of lurches, although it is a

fact that if he be in the very first stages of drunkenness he will walk with a peculiarly rigid and determined straightness. If he comes home wholly under the influence of liquor he executes a series of slides against the parlour wall. The moment a drunken man lurches, give him the least push in the direction of his lurch and down he will go. I was not yet seven years old when I became aware of this peculiarity in drunkards. I have in the period to which I refer seen a heavy, big, powerful drunkard sent sprawling to the floor by a slight push from the hand of a slim and delicate wife. Nevertheless, it happens often enough nowadays that when one picks up a newspaper one reads that a man has been sent to prison for beating his wife while he was drunk. I think it will be found in such cases that the woman took her drunken husband by his ears and pounded his head against the wall. The man is almost certain to fall to the floor and when the woman falls with him—as she is sure to do—she fancies she has been beaten. Our magistrates have evidently never lived in drunkards' homes.

If it be suspected that as a child I must have moved in queer society, I can only make the observation that I once saw the pastor of our church, a magistrate of local repute and an uncle of my own, all drunk together in my mother's parlour. The spectacle did not impress me at the time as being in the least extraordinary. We children in those days accepted the drunkenness of our elders as a normal factor of the environment to which we had to adjust ourselves. There were, indeed, people who set themselves firmly against the habit of drinking intoxicating liquors. Such people were almost invariably Methodists—concerning whom my mother told me that they shouted to God in the belief that they would be forgiven their sins by shouting—or miserly fanatics who wanted to accumulate money in the savings bank. I used to be told as a boy that John B. Gough, a noted temperance-crusader of the time, and Neal Dow, another, went to bed drunk every night. We children got the idea that advocates of total abstention from alcoholic drink were really hypocrites. As all these people painted pictures of drunkards and of drunkards' homes which I knew from daily observation and experience corresponded to no reality recognizable in the life around me, I could only marvel at their depravity. My father told me that men like John B. Gough, Neal Dow and Francis Murphy got rich by getting money from deluded Methodists. Methodists drank only water, it seemed, and I could not understand it.

My father's, extenuation of his own indulgence in alcoholic drinks—and he was the heaviest drinker I ever met in my life with the exception of the pastor of our church—was based upon the stimulating effect it had upon business. I often heard my father say that if the prohibitionists ever "carried" this country it would be the death of business and the poor would then have to emigrate to Mexico and South America. My father lived by effecting the sale of things—patent medicines in vast quantities, books that weighed five pounds each, fire escapes and the equipment for dime museums—and one of his theories was that no man could be a salesman who did not know how to drink with his patrons.

My father certainly knew how to drink, and all the men in our circle knew how to drink. There was, among these, a fiddler in an orchestra connected with a cheap theatre who made, as the phrase ran, "good money." I saw this man regularly Sunday after Sunday, week in and week out, always drunk. There was likewise the policeman on the beat whose drunkenness, I must admit, was inevitable because of the intimacy of his association with my father's circle. There was the clergyman to whom I have referred, remarkable, besides his intemperance, for the fact that he only, besides my father, could speak German and French fluently.

This clergyman would turn up occasionally with an ordained friend from a neighbouring city who usually left our house the worse for liquor. I would be told that the unfortunate man had not been able to get a drink in his own town for months owing to the prejudice against alcohol among certain peculiar Christians. I dare affirm that behind many a flourishing bar the supply of intoxicating beverages could not compare in quantity or in quality with those in my father's cellar, or so I have heard our landlord say when he came to collect the rent. His infirmity—our landlord's not my father's—was known as a "quarrelling" drunk. He would call for the rent, to be sure, but by the time he got it, his state bordered on inebriety. His practice then was to pick up the dishes from the dining-room table and hurl them into our back yard. We always had to put the baby to bed when the landlord came lest he kill it with a demijohn. I was fairly well acquainted as a boy with the prominent residents of the neighbourhood in which I lived and I can not now remember one who did not at least occasionally indulge in alcoholic liquors to excess. Among them were a hero of Gettysburg and a woman portrait-painter.

Drunkenness, then, was the note of the period. I think this drunkenness set in with the great centennial celebration in Philadelphia, the home of my childhood. This saturation of the American consciousness with drunkenness as a natural fact of civilization, to be accepted like tuberculosis and hard times, endured, it seems to me, until almost the dawn of the twentieth century. What a picturesque element it comprised in the narrow lives of those of us who were the children of the poor! We enjoyed it hugely. There were dreary intervals during which the parents of some of us “swore off”; intervals which meant stricter attendance of school, less staying out at night and—the most terrible thing of all—prompt obedience to our parents! Luckily, these periods were of short duration. When, as the stars came out, we missed a familiar playmate and were told that a little friend could no longer roam the streets at night because his father had “swore off,” we consoled ourselves with the reflection that the old man—one’s father was always the old man—would in due time go on a spree.

A typical experience of a childhood passed in such an atmosphere was to be sent for beer. A man who has never in his childhood been sent for beer to a “saloon”—an establishment for the sale of beer and whisky was then known by no other name—might conjecture that an errand of that description must have been simple. In reality the mission was complex.

The saloon was almost always on a street-corner. It might happen, even in a respectable neighbourhood, that there would be a saloon on every corner. The saloon might, it is true, be set up in the middle of the block, but this was unusual, unless an alley was available. There was quite a choice of saloons before the child, and there was often a brisk competition among the bartenders for what was known as family trade. A boy coming in for a pint of beer would expect a large pretzel at the least, and in order to retain his interest in the place it was usual to give him a large sausage now and then, or a whole pie. He had the run of the free-lunch counter when there happened to be one. This free provender alone sufficed to reduce to absurdity the temperance-lecturer’s picture of the drunkard’s starving child. Those of us who went for beer in my childhood—and we all went unless we had the ill luck to be girls—were actually overfed. There was, indeed, a convention among drinking parents which forbade them to send their own children for beer. You could not send your own child but there was nothing to prevent you from sending the neighbour’s child. My own regular and

frequent visits to lager beer saloons during the Hayes, Garfield and Arthur Administrations were invariably in my capacity as the neighbour's child.

Choice of a particular saloon among so many presented perplexing embarrassments to a child because it was always possible that the proprietor might have been in difficulty recently for having sold his wares to a minor. The establishment was in that event not necessarily off one's visiting-list. There might be an available alley. It was often possible to enter a neighbour's front door and climb a fence. An entrance through a back cellar door was at hand occasionally. I remember I achieved distinction through the ease and assurance with which I effected entries into the most notorious saloons even on Sundays in the very teeth of the dirty Methodists. (Most opponents of saloons in my boyhood were assumed to be Methodists and dirty.)

If the choice of the saloon was of critical importance now and then, the receptacle for the beer always called for careful consideration. Personally as a boy I had no objection to any form of receptacle whatever. I have gone for beer with an iron vessel as heavy and as large as a soup tureen. This was unusual, however, because the women who sent me for beer—they were nearly always women—did not like the look of a thing of that sort. A boy of nine bringing a frothing can of beer up the front steps was not a spectacle to appeal to a lady who painted portraits and who seems, as I look back upon these days, almost to have set me up in the liquor business. It happened once that I went four times to a saloon in one afternoon for that particular lady. (She was giving an exhibition of her works in her studio.) This was unusual good luck. She let me keep the change each time.

The usual fee for such commissions was a nickel three-cent piece, then in circulation. It was precisely the amount of the change from one dime after the purchase of a pint of beer, until the price rose to eight cents, whereupon a boy who went for beer got only a two-cent piece. How young I am made by the sight of a two- or a three-cent piece, bringing back to me the pervasive whiff of that eternal beer and the interior settings of those hospitable saloons! It was the habit of the women of the period to assemble in the kitchen and to send the first available boy—under ten usually—for a pint of beer. Some of these gatherings would keep me busily employed for a whole afternoon. If any man infers that these beer-parties were made up of servants exclusively, I can correct him from personal observation. There

were servants, indeed, but the hardest drinker was the wife of the president of a local street-railway company. I remember her particularly because I once climbed two back fences and narrowly escaped the clutches of a Methodist to get that woman a pint of beer, and then she gave me exactly one cent, after scolding me for being so long.

Sundays were the great days for us children. Equipped with a hat box of the Victorian period or armed with a violin case, within which was concealed a tin receptacle that would hold a pint, we would walk boldly through the streets of Philadelphia until we came to a “speak-easy.” This is one way of saying that we did not have to walk far. The term “speak-easy” is an anachronism, for it was not popularized until I had attained the age of twelve or more. When the police were known to be strict, the lady who had sent the little boy for beer was expected to walk ahead of him to see that the coast was clear. The child—I speak from personal experience—walked through a door into an alley and down into a cellar. I gained admittance only because I was so well-known to the bartenders. It was nothing for me to visit a “speak-easy” twice after Sunday school.

It never struck me at the time but it has often struck me since that there should be anything out of the ordinary or in the least unconventional in the kind of childhood I have been describing. All my playmates, boys of my own age, went for beer in this fashion and the fathers of nearly all of them were seen by us under the influence of liquor. In the circle in which I moved drunkenness seemed a sort of jest, and in the writings of this period —not excepting those of Dickens—drunkenness was not taken at all seriously. It was never regarded as a tragedy to the souls steeped in its airs of light and shadow, its medley of laughter and shame. It involved for us neither hunger nor rags. To the children of sober parents we were wont to assume an attitude of disdain. This drunkenness was so completely the “note” of that period that all the eminent statesmen, not only in this country but in England, were assumed to be heavy drinkers. I, myself, as a lad have seen an exalted judicial dignitary of the county in which I lived call the crowd in a saloon up to the bar for a drink at his expense.

The respectable people of those days, it seems to me, materialized the whole case against the drunkard. If he had been the poor, ragged, hungry object of the temperance-lecturers, that would not have mattered so very much. Instead, these drunkards were good fathers. They provided for their

children. They won the love of their children. But a child surrounded by drunken elders associated with the word “father” ideas that were a negation of Christianity. It was impossible for the children of that generation to regard their fathers with reverence. This destruction of the capacity for reverence in the child has been affirmed by a great educator to comprise the greatest of all spiritual catastrophes that can overtake it. The difficulty here was all the greater because the instruction in our Sunday schools was imparted by young men and women who seemed to have only the temperance-lecturer’s theory of the drunkard’s child. What these educators and temperance-lecturers never suspected was that from the material point of view the advantages were all on the side of the drunkard’s child, that the drunkard’s child had not a care in the world. He did not even have to go to school. He could not be Christianized, that is all. Mention of his Heavenly Father merely effected in his mind a magnified abstraction of the essential trait of his earthly father.

A. H. 12. vii. 22.

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## ASPECTS OF CORNWALL

INFINITY itself, I conceive, might lose some of its horror when, beside the sea, the world itself seems no more to have a limit; for, as in Aristotle’s profound saying that in art there must be continual sight-variety, so the sea alone, of all things, to us ephemeral mortals who may perchance put on the shifting vesture of immortality, has the continual sight-variety of all great art. To our lawless minds, to our rebellious instincts, to our passionate imaginings, restlessness is inevitable; that restlessness which must abide always in the nerves and in the blood of those who create. One creates one’s images out of the body’s discontent and out of the rage of unsatiated eyes and out of the lust of satiated lips and out of the sweet bitterness of the serpent’s sting. One creates figures that are symbols of one’s bodily sensitiveness and of the spirit’s sensitiveness: we see their wasted veins and bloodless faces, those who are lost in luxurious passions, who sin inevitably. Evil, I have said, evil itself, carried to the point of a perverse ecstasy, becomes a kind of good, by means of that energy which, otherwise directed, is virtue; and which can never, no matter how its course may be

changed, fail to retain something of its original efficacy. So, in Hogarth and in Goya, as in Daumier and in Méryon, a profound spiritual corruption is in some mysterious fashion—by some mysterious marriage of Heaven and Hell—set in fiery motion, into a form of divine possession, which can never be the triumph of the Spirit over the Flesh. Yet evil can be justified of itself, and the revelation of evil in art equally justified. Plotinus, in his treatise "On the Nature of Good and Evil," declares:

> But evil is permitted to remain by itself alone on account of the superior power and nature of good; because it appears from necessity everywhere comprehended and bound, in beautiful bonds, like men fettered with golden chains, lest it should be produced openly to the view of divinity, or lest mankind should always behold its horrid shape when perfectly naked; and such is the supervening power of good, that whenever a glimpse of perfect evil is obtained we are immediately recalled to the memory of good by the image of the beautiful with which evil is invested.

I have never forgotten the summer of 1895, which I spent with Charles Conder and Aubrey Beardsley in Dieppe; Beardsley who liked the large, deserted rooms in the Casino, at hours when no one was there; the sense of frivolous things caught at a moment of suspended life, *en déshabillé*. At night he was almost always watching the gamblers at *petits chevaux*, studying them with a kind of hypnotized attention for that picture of "The Little Horses," which was never done. He never walked; I never saw him look at the sea. Yet one enters with him into a world where the soul, infinite in its curious capacity for sin, follows with inevitable weariness the sins that were once a pleasure, the sins that have turned into images of disgust; it has become more than ever languid, somewhat less luxurious, more than ever imbued with mockery. It was because he admired and hated Oscar Wilde that Beardsley created a Salome entirely of his own fashioning, into which entered a diabolical beauty, beauty not yet divided against its passion for its own beauty and for its own nakedness. He introduces "Pierrot Gamin" of Verlaine into the irreverent design of "The Black Cape"; he introduces tragic horror into the austere and terrible design of "The Dancer's Reward," in the dripping head of John the Baptist, thrust aloft by a long black arm. He symbolizes his evil genius in that abominable drawing of a hideous monster who opens a book on which is inscribed—inscribed in sheer and devilish irony—Dante's inscription to Love: *Incipit Vita Nova*. He symbolized his evil genius in "The Scarlet Pastorale," where a harlequin of his invention struts close to the footlights, turning his back on the play; and, beyond him

—with Beardsley's sense of profanity—sacramental candles have been lighted which, under an unseen wind, gutter down in solitude. . . .

I came to Kynance Cove on a miraculous morning; on the way there I plunged into deep abysses of mud and of bog. The bog and the yielding pressure of the heather reminded me of Rosses Point in Ireland; here, on the Lizard Downs, as there, the ground which one fancies to be solid, proves, if one tries to cross it, to be a great, yielding bog, with intervals of rock on hard soil; to walk over it is to move in short jumps, with an occasional longer leap. I had to take great leaps here, across a dried-up watercourse. The bog is treacherous: the heather has the treachery which is one of the allurements of voluptuous things; and for this reason I like the voluptuous softness of the bog, for one's feet sink luxuriously into the pale, golden mounds of moss which rise between the rusty heather and the starveling grasses. I always find it luxurious to lie on my back on the scented heather, which evokes visions; luxurious also when one's feet slide gently into its soft depths, which have no resistance, which rise again as the waves rise.

So, on the way there, I tried that experiment: I lay sideways on the heather and cast my eyes in all directions. The moor seemed endless, covered with its inevitable sombre colours. It is not desolate, not barren; it is full of strange savage beauty; it has an enigmatical fascination; there is something inexplicable in the enigma this moor presents to one: there is nothing inexplicable in the fact that I am alone. Even the narrow muddy track to the sea has, for my imagination, its attraction.

No sooner had I arrived on that huge height, from which I saw on the right enormous slopes like the creation of giants—giants risen from a deep pit under the earth—covered with savage, sombre tints of colours, intricate and bewildering, and, between that and the slope on which I stood, a steep path through a notch of serpentine which leads to the beach, which one has to scramble over, so as to reach a corner of the rocks washed by the tide, from which one enters a land-locked amphitheatre deserted by the waves at low water; than I was seized by the glamour and by the fearful fascination of this wizard's work. Sublime, secluded from the jealous world's eyes, with giant heads staring at one, grim and gaunt on the horizon, with immense caverns that hid huge depths between them, formidable gullies, uncouth shapes of stones flung this way and that way on the uneven ground; and, with all this, such rarities in the way of colours as one sees only in

Cornwall. I thought then of the mediæval humor in old Cornish legends, which still plays freakishly with the saints and with the Devil. Here, however, there is nothing of the satanic humour, the games of giants, the goblin-gambols of the Spirits of the Sea and of the Earth, that one finds at Land's End. Everywhere in Cornwall, as in Wales, in Ireland and in Spain, the people are superstitious. I find on the seacoast of Cornwall, just as I found on the seacoasts of Ireland and Wales, besides the dignity of the peasants, a fine laziness when they are in the open air, and a subduing sense of the sea's peril, its hold upon their fortunes and lives, which often moulds them into a self-sufficing manliness, a hardy womanhood.

This almost supernatural night, almost spectacular, almost theatrical, almost spectral, creeps over my senses with an intense sense of the mystery that exists in all things: in Hell and in Heaven, in the fire, the sea, the wind, in life, in death, in passion, in abnegation, in despair and in ecstasy. All this comes over me. with an inexplicable thrill, an enigmatical insistence on I know not what: this soft sense of being enveloped, as one always is in a Cornish sea-mist, in an atmosphere unknown to one—an atmosphere of this world and not of this world.

I hear the sea-gulls crying with scornful laughter, chattering in a bizarre fashion, shrieking aloud their hatred, shouting with inhuman mockery, with infinite contempt, as they shake in intense nervous excitement. These sea-birds, who have the ferocity of their race, and a savage abandonment to their lawless natures; whose will is not the wind's will or the sea's will, but a will that directs their course and that rules over their lives and their loves, that is shown in their indomitable sense of flight, in their unflagging energy; these sea-birds, when they are not resting or poising on their wings, have always in their savage throats a hunger for the utterance of unimaginable things and of those "lawless and uncertain thoughts," that one imagines they express at their wildest point of ecstasy, in their contact with the deadly and storm-swept air, and in the very hearts of the fiercest tempests where alone they find exultation. At the Land's End, where I felt at once secure and alone, like a bird in a cleft of a rock, there was the restlessness of space, the noise of the sea and of the sea-birds: there the sea-gulls cry and laugh night and day: night and day one hears the sea crying and laughing.

The other night I heard a sound that resembled the sound of thunder: it was literally the storm-tossed sea surging with an intense and unrelaxing violence on the rocks in Kennack Bay. The full moon cast a shining and a shifting shadow on the sea—almost “a pathway of gold,” as in Browning’s verses.

Whenever the serpent-headed waves toss maliciously, green, not venomous, those lines of Rossetti’s surge before me.

> Consider the sea’s listless chime:
> Time’s self it is, made audible—
> The murmur of the earth’s own shell.
> Secret continuance sublime
> Is the sea’s end: our sight may pass
> No furlong further. Since time was
> This sound hath told the lapse of time.

Such are the limits of the sea: beyond these limits there may be the quiet which is death’s; only, in our own mournfulness, we must image the sea’s mournfulness, “enduring always at dull strife.” It is this dull strife, that makes the sea one’s invincible enemy: a strife with the wind, with the rocks, the sand, the dunes, the ships, and with our own existences.

The sea, which changes like music, continually, is a mirror, not only to the stars and to the moon, but to all one’s dreams; and that room of mirrors, painted by Holman Hunt, in which the fabulous Lady of Shalott wove her fate, is but an image of the sea’s irresistible imprisonment of oneself with oneself. So, at Mullion Cove, one is, as it were, imprisoned, deep inside a narrow harbour, no more than two boat’s lengths wide at the entrance, where the sea chafes at the wall and at the rocks, planted hugely without; great black heights which cut off half the sunlight as one passes into their shadow. There is something fierce in its seclusion; so much so that I always felt there as I felt in Cadiz, when at night I used to wander on the desolate stretch of ground behind the Cathedral, pushing my way against the wild wind until I leaned over the wall, and could watch the grey waves heaving up and down with the long roll of the Atlantic. The sea tells us that nothing ever changes, that all existence is a rhythm, that tides go out and return, and that it can give us the sleep of a narcotic.

A. S. 18. x. 22.

## NOVEMBER DAYS

THE west was radiant with colour as I reached the lake and looked beyond the encircling hills. Immediately above the horizon, in an apple-green sky, floated two sunset clouds—coral islands in a tranquil sea. Above, in the robin's-egg blue, massive clouds were aflame, their edges touched with grey; and higher still, billowy opal clouds against a background of deeper blue. A flaming cornucopia slowly uncurled itself until it was only a long slender ribbon floating across the heavens. What fascination to watch their ever-changing shape and colour; to see them turn from white to vivid rose and, as the sun's rays touch them, take on a deeper, richer red; until, turning drab and, melting into mist, they finally merge into the steel-blue sky! In the east all was dark, forbidding, cold. Near the water's edge rested an austere purple cloud, but suddenly, kissed by the sun, it seemed to blush rosily and dimple. But the glamour vanished almost as soon as it came. In the west I saw a proud white gull rise, with a whir of wings, from the water at my feet, and glide into the gold of the sunset, like an airship sailing off in quest of some happy adventure. In these few moments the whole west had changed. What had seemed a blue-green sea was now a desert on whose saffron sands the erstwhile rosy, boat-like clouds were patches of dark and dusty herbage; the cloudlets, a caravan of camels toiling its weary way across the desert.

In the track of the sun a fisherman cast away his minnow, stood up in his boat and raised his anchor, frightening a flock of grebe which scurried and scuttled along the! surface of the water. Then there was a harsh cry, and a dextrous kingfisher swooped down from an overhanging branch and, seizing the minnow, flew exultantly with it along the wooded shore. A light breeze stirred the water into dancing ripples. Away in the southeast the scene was Oriental, with its soft gradations of saffron, yellow, rose, blue, green, like the iridescent sands of the desert beneath a cloudless sky of pure gold. Were it not for the chill winds of autumn how easy it would be to imagine oneself in the land where "the vine hath budded and its blossom is open and the pomegranates are in flower." On the hill beneath the setting sun a field of alfalfa lay green and shining between two russet woods, and

in the midst of it rose a solitary ruddy oak. For a moment before the sun reached the rim of the hill a great splash of glowing light flooded the field and the woods; then the shadows came and robbed the scene of all its garish colours. I watched all this fade, as I listened to the twittering of the bank swallows flitting along the shore, the lowing of the distant cattle and, now and then, the harsh, discordant note of the blue-jay, and the “caw caw” of the crows, which seemed to be begging for a longer day. Over the tree-tops a cormorant flew swiftly into the west; its black body and bullet-like head, with its long pink bill, gleamed for a moment in the after-glow. I wondered if it were the last of the birds seeking a night’s rest. As I climbed the hill to my cottage I turned to look back at the tall oak trees silhouetted against the lake and sky. All was hushed, bathed in a silver glow as gentle as moonlight.

Later I went out into the night. Through the tree-tops the stars shone brightly—Venus, the ever-faithful, blue Vega above, Deneb the guardian of the Milky Way, Altair and ruddy Antares. Through an avenue of trees I caught a glimpse of the red embers of my neighbour’s bonfire; the thin blue smoke curled lazily upward, and the light breeze brought me the scent of burning leaves and birch twigs. The air was redolent of the odours of an autumn night—the aroma of dew-laden shrubs, the pungent smoke, and the smell of the damp earth. How vividly odours bring back old memories: the sweetbrier at the gate of our childhood home; pennyroyal as we gathered blueberries in our youth; the aromatic perfume of the balsam as we searched for lady-slippers beneath its branches!

Passing through the woods to reach the open hill, I was startled by the eerie wail of a screech owl; two bats darted past my face. I heard the cheery voices of two country lads. “It’s fine and clear.” “Think we’ll have frost.” “Good night.” Good, indeed! It was absolutely calm, not even a leaf rustled; one could hear only the deep breathings of the night. Dimly I could see Sadman’s lonely cedar on Breakneck Hill a mile away. The long ridge beyond the lake was distinct, and hung like a deep hem on the spangled robe of the firmament. Lights flamed in windows of a little farmhouse not far away. Within, the daily tasks were over—for all but the weary mother—and one could imagine the family seated about the lamp, the rest with books and papers, she with the never-empty mending-basket on her lap. But what light is that—now a silvery mist, and now a golden glow! It increases in

strength; it lights up Smenkin's farm—the huge barns, the hay-ricks, the great, gaunt, leafless trees. Suddenly it comes into full view—the two head-lamps of a motorcar! Swiftly over the brow of the hill it sweeps, down into the valley, as into an abyss, and is lost. I was not sorry to see it disappear, and turned with a sigh of relief to the fitful glow of the lights from Bramleigh town, and to the panorama of the sky. The blue-black sky was aglow. It looked like the Milky Way. Surely there never were so many stars. So large they seemed, so bright, so near! I scarcely dared stretch out my hand lest I should touch them. I watched the Big Dipper sink slowly in the north and the Pleiades tremble in the east, and the waning moon, touching the distant hill-tops with silver. As I turned towards home I felt the wind rising, and heard the rustle of the dead leaves as they scurried about the ground, and in a few hours the whole sky was overcast, and the moon hidden by great banks of rolling clouds. Ah, it is November, and with a pang of regret, I know that my days in the country are numbered.

H. SW. 29. xi. 22.

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## A NOTE ON THE SCOTTISH BALLADS

IT is a thing worth noting that the one or two great poets whom Scotland has produced have been men in the ordinary sense uncultivated. Excepting Scott, those of whom we know anything have sprung from peasant or humble stock; and there was even before Burns, who set a fashion, a tradition of peasant poetry and a belief that an artificer of Scottish song might most congruously be a ploughman or a weaver. In poets of this degree, so scarce in English literature, Scottish poetry has almost always been prolific; and against the solitary figure of Blomfield it can set Fergusson, Ramsay, Tannahill, and a host of others, the worst of whom are sentimental and the best, if minor poets, most authentically poets. Outside these, among her imaginative prose writers, Scotland has shown a disposition for common and even mean conditions. Carlyle was the son of a mason, and George Douglas, the young student of Glasgow University who wrote one novel of passionate genius, "The House with the Green Shutters" and then died, was the illegitimate offspring of a servant girl. Since English became the literary language of Scotland there has been no Scots

imaginative writer who has attained greatness in the first or even the second rank through the medium of English. Scott achieved classical prose, prose with the classical qualities of solidity, force and measure, only when he wrote in the Scottish dialect; his Scottish dialogue is great prose, and his one essay in Scottish imaginative literature, “Wandering Willie’s Tale,” is a masterpiece of prose, of prose which one must go back to the seventeenth century to parallel. The style of Carlyle, on the other hand, was taken bodily from the Scots pulpit; he was a parish minister of genius, and his English was not great English, but great Scots English; the most hybrid of all styles, with some of the virtues of the English Bible and many of the vices of the Scottish version of the Psalms of David; a style whose real model may be seen in Scott’s anticipatory parody of it in “Old Mortality.” He took the most difficult qualities of the English language and the worst of the Scots and through them attained a sort of absurd, patchwork greatness. But—this can be said for him—his style expressed, in spite of its overstrain, and even through it, something real, the struggle of a Scots peasant, born to other habits of speech and of thought, with the English language. Stevenson—and it was the sign of his inferiority, his lack of fundamental merit—never had this struggle, nor realized that it was necessary that he should have it. He was from the first a mere literary man, a man to whom language was a literary medium and nothing more, and with no realization of the unconditional mystery and strength of utterance. He sweated over words, but the more laboriously he studied them the more superficial he became, and to the end his conception of an English style remained that of a graceful and coloured surface for his thoughts and sensations. Below this were concealed, as pieces of unresolved matter, almost an irrelevancy, the plots of his novels, his knobbly or too smooth characters, and his thoughts which he had never the courage to face. What he achieved was more akin than anything else to what another foreigner, Mr. Joseph Conrad, has since achieved: a picturesque display of words, with something unspanned between the sense and the appearance. The other two Scots-English writers of the last half-century, John Davidson and James Thomson, the author of “The City of Dreadful Night,” were greater men than Stevenson, less affected and more fundamental: but fundamental as they were, they lacked something which in English poetry is fundamental, and the oblivion into which they are fallen, undeserved as it seems when we consider their great

talents, is yet, on some ground not easy to state, just. The thing I am examining here, superficial in appearance, goes deep. No writer can write great English who is not born an English writer and in England; and born moreover in some class in which the tradition of English is pure, and it seems to me, therefore, in some other age than this. English as it was written by Bunyan or by Fielding can not be written now except by some one who like them has passed his days in a tradition of living English speech. A whole life went into that prose; and all that Stevenson could give to his was a few decades of application. And because the current of English is even at this day so much younger, poorer and more artificial in Scotland than it is in England, it is improbable that Scotland will produce any writer of English of the first rank, or at least that she will do so until her tradition of English is as common, as unforced and unschooled as if it were her native tongue.

Nor does this exhaust the possibilities, or impossibilities, of the Scottish manipulation of English. The superficially significant thing about Scottish writers is that they generally come from some humble rank of life; the superficially significant thing about English writers is that they come, as a rule, from some class cultivated, or with a tradition of culture. This difference is, taking a purely literary view, a matter of speech, but it is not entirely nor indeed chiefly so. What distinguishes the Scottish peasantry is not only its cradling in the dialect, but a whole view of life, a view of life intensely simple on certain great, human things, but naturalistic, perhaps in a certain sense materialistic. This simple vision of life, of life as a thing of sin and pleasure, passing, but passing with an intense vividness as of a flame, before something eternal, is the greatest thing which Scotland has given to the literature of the world. Everything which obscures the clearness of this vision, making it less simple than itself when it is most simple, is antagonistic to the Scottish genius; and here, and here only, in defence of their naturalism, of this terrific, sad and simple vision of life, the Scots are iconoclasts, and contemptuous of the thing called culture or humanism which in other lands has had such glorious fruits. Knox expressed the national temper when, disdainfully asserting that the image of the Madonna was only “a bit painted wuid,” he threw it into the sea; and Carlyle repeated it on a grand scale in his Dumfriesshire judgments on all the figures which the culture of the West gave into his hands. Carlyle, in genius one of the

greatest of all the writers born in Scotland, was in attainment one of the most patchy and immature, simply because he constantly passed judgments on men and cultures foreign to him; judgments which of Scotsman and Scots culture would have been true, but which of them were valid perhaps only on some intensely human plane, and on every other absurd.

This sense of life and death, of pleasure and sin, of joy and loss, not thrown out lavishly into all the manifestations of life as Shakespeare threw them out, but intensified to one point, to the breaking point where a flame springs forth: that is the sense which has inspired the greatest Scottish poetry: the poetry of Burns, the poetry of the ballads. Burns, it is true, was more nearly than any other Scottish poet a humanist, and had more than any other a delight in the variety of life; but when he was greatest he came to simplicity, that simplicity of stark, fundamental human things which the ballads more perfectly than any other poetry express. He is not greatest in lines, magical as they are, such as

> Yestreen when to the trembling string
> The dance gaed through the lighted ha',

but in

> And sae I sat, and sae I sang,
> And wistna o' my fate,

or in

> We twa hae paidl'd in the burn
> Frae morning sun to dine,
> But seas between us braid hae roared
> Sin' auld lang syne,

or in

> And I will luve thee still, my dear,
> Though a' the seas gang dry.

The unquenchability of desire, the inexorability of separation, the lapse of time, and all these seen against something eternal and as if, expressed in a few lines, they were what human beings have felt from the beginning of time and must feel until time ends: these things, uttered with entire simplicity, are what at its best Scottish poetry can give us, and it can give

them with the intensity and the inevitability of the greatest poetry. The ballads go immediately to that point beyond which it is impossible to go, and touch the very bounds of passion and of life; and they achieve great poetry by an unconditionality which rejects, where other literatures use, the image. In no poetry, probably, in the world is there less imagery than in the ballads. But this, once more, is not the sign of poetic debility, but of a terrific simplicity and intensity, an intensity which never loosens into reflection; and reflection is one of the moods in which images are given to the mind. There is nothing in the ballads but passion, terror, instinct, action: the states in which soul and body alike live most intensely; and this accounts for the impression of full and moving life which, stark and bare as they are, they leave with us. It is this utter absence of reflection which distinguishes them also from the English ballads, not only from those surrounding the name of Robin Hood, which are nothing but simple folk-art, but from really beautiful English ballads such as “The Unquiet Grave.” There are several Scottish ballads containing, like it, a dialogue between two lovers, the one living and the other dead; but there is none which treats the subject in this way:

> “The wind doth blow to-day, my love,
> And a few small drops of rain;
> I never had but one true love;
> In cold grave she is lain. . . .
>
> “’Tis down in yonder garden green,
> Love, where we used to walk,
> The finest flower that ere was seen
> Is withered to a stalk.
>
> “The stalk is withered dry, my love,
> So will our hearts decay;
> So make yourself content, my love,
> Till God call you away.”

That is beautiful, and as poetry as perfect in its way as anything in the Scottish ballads; but what a difference there is in spirit and in atmosphere. Here there is retrospection and resignation; but there only the present, the eternal present, and the immediate acceptance of it, exist, and we never escape from the unmixed joy, the absolute pain,. There is philosophy in “The Unquiet Grave,” the quality of a great reflective poetry; there is

morality in it, the inescapable ethical sense of the English, and that feeling of ultimate surrender which goes always with a genuine morality. But see with what a total lack of moral, compensation, or of moral bluntening, or of resignation, or of alleviation—with what a lyrical and unconditional passion the same theme is treated in a great Scottish ballad, in “Clerk Saunders”:

“Is there ony room at your head, Saunders?
    Is there ony room at your feet?
Or ony room at your side, Saunders,
    Where fain, fain wad I sleep?”

“There’s nae room at my head, Marg’ret,
    There’s nae room at my feet;
My bed it is fu’ lowly now,
    Amang the hungry worms I sleep.”

Or, almost as simple and great:

“O cocks are crowing on merry middle earth,
    I wot the wild fowls are boding day;
Give me my faith and troth again,
    And let me fare me on my way.”

“Thy faith and troth thou sallna get,
    And our true love sail never twin,
Until ye tell what comes o’ women,
    I wot, who die in strong traivelling”

I do not wish to make any comparison between these two poems, both great in their kind, or to praise one at the expense of the other. I wish merely, what is infinitely more important, to make clear what are the peculiar attributes of the Scottish ballads, and what it is that they have given to the poetry of the world. And it is pre-eminently this sense of immediate love, terror, drama; this ecstatic living in passion at the moment of its expression and not on reflection, and the experiencing of it therefore purely, as unmixed joy, as complete terror, in a concentration on the apex of the moment, in a shuddering realization of the moment, whatever it may be, whether it is

I wish that horn were in my kist,
    Yea, and the knight in my arms neist.

or

And I am weary o’ the skies
For my love that died for me.

or

Yestreen I made my bed fu’ braid,
The night I’ll make it narrow.

or

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Everie nighte and alle,
Fire and sleete and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.

This world in which there is no reflection, no regard for the utility of action, nothing but pure passion seen through pure vision, is, if anything is, the world of art. To raise immediate passion to poetry in this way, without the alleviation of reflection, without the necromancy of memory, requires a vision of unconditional clearness, like that of a child; and it may be said of the Scottish ballad-writers that they attained poetry by pure, unalleviated insight, by unquestioning artistic heroism; and this quality it is that, in the last analysis, makes the very greatest poetry great, that makes “Lear” great, and “Antony and Cleopatra.” In Shakespeare and in Dante it is united with other qualities through which its utterance becomes infinitely various and rich: in the greatest of the Scottish ballads there is this quality, and this alone. This, and not the occasional strangeness of their subject matter, is what gives them their magic, a magic of ultimate simplicity, of supernatural simplicity, as in

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded rivers abune the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

from “Thomas the Rhymer.” Or, from “Tam Lin”:

About the dead hour o’ the night
She heard the bridles ring.

There is here nothing but a final clearness of vision which finds of itself, as by some natural, or rather, supernatural, process, an absolute reality of utterance which does not need the image. The thing is given in the ballads and not a simile either illuminating or cloaking it; and this absence of the image has in itself an artistic value, and produces an effect which can not be produced in any other way: it makes the real form and colour of things stand out with a distinctness which is that, not of things seen by daylight, but of those, more absolute, more incapable of being questioned, which we see in dreams. When a colour is set before us in the ballads it has a reality which colour has not in poetry where imagery is used; it has not merely a poetic value, it has the ultimate value of pure colour. This is the reason why the ballad of "Jamie Douglas" gives us an impression of richness as of some intricate tapestry, though the means are as simple as

> When we cam' in by Glasgow toun
> We were a comely sicht to see;
> My Love was clad in the black velvet,
> And I mysel' in cramasie,

or

> I had lock'd my heart in a case o' gowd
> And pinn'd it wi' a siller pin.

There the qualities of the velvet, the crimson, the gold and silver are seen as they are only seen in childhood, for the first time, and with something solid in the vision of them; something which we have perhaps for ever lost, and which the painters of our day, with their preoccupation with volume, are trying to rediscover; but which was given to the ballad-writers by the sheer unconditionally of their vision, and by that something materalistic in the imagination of the Scots which is one of their greatest qualities.

The art of these ballads may appear to us untutored, rough, falling occasionally into absurdities, and, regarding such things as diction and rhyme, showing a contempt for the perfection towards which all art necessarily strives. But the more we study them the more astonished we must become at their perfection on another side: that completeness of organic form which makes each an economically articulated thing. There is, it is true, a sort of logic of ballad-writing, a technique of repetition, of

question and answer, not difficult to handle and handled in some of the ballads far too freely; but in the greatest, in “Clerk Saunders,” “May Colvin,” “The Lass of Lochroyan,” and “Sir Patrick Spens,” the technique is fused in the inevitability of the movement from beginning to end, so that one can see them in one glance as one sees a short lyric. The sensation which these give us is the sensation which can only be given by great conscious art. It is not a matter of the compulsory unity which folk-ballads, sung before a company, must have: for that one need only go to the English ballads about Robin Hood, ballads definitely beneath the level of poetry, which can run on in the style of

> The King cast off his coat then,
> A green garment he did on,
> And every knight had so, i-wis,
> They clothed them full soon,

for as long as one likes. The difference between that and

> The King sits in Dunfermline toun
> Drinking the blude-red wine

is the difference between a thing seen and shaped by a company of common men in a jovial mood, and a thing seen and shaped by a great spirit, lifted up on the wings of imagination. All these English ballads are timid, ordinary, and have the mediocre happy ending which crowds love. For example, three of Robin Hood’s followers, we are told, go down to London, cast themselves on the King’s mercy and nevertheless are condemned to death: they are reprieved at the last moment by the Queen. This would not happen in a great Scottish ballad. Johnnie Armstrong, in the ballad of that name, puts himself in the power of the Scots King, and he, too, is condemned to die, but there is no reprieve. The difference in treatment between the two episodes is the difference once more between great poetry, imagined by a heroic and sincere spirit, and second rate folk-poetry, recounted by good-natured and insincere men. In the ballads of Robin Hood we are not told, as we are in the Scottish, what must happen, the circumstances being such and such; we are told what the ballad-makers wish to happen. The vulgarity of the happy ending, which has disfigured so much of the greatest English imaginative literature since, making it less

great than it should have been, is already full-fledged here. I say vulgarity, for the fault of the happy ending is that it is vulgar; it is a descent from the level of aesthetic vision where tragedy is bearable to that of our ordinary wishes, where it is not; a complete betrayal of truth and beauty at the bidding of an impulse perfectly natural and perfectly common. This surrender negates form by its own spirit, just as the unflinching grasp of aesthetic vision holds and fulfills form. The dependence of style upon this thing is in poetry absolute; and it is by virtue of their spirit, and because they are conceived and executed entirely on the level of aesthetic vision, that the Scottish ballads are opulent in examples of great form and great style, as, to quote an example of both:

> "Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
> Edward, Edward?
> "Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
> And why sae sad gang ye, O?"
>
> "O I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
> Mither, mither;
> O I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
> And I had nae mair but he, O."

To write poetry such as that, not only an exquisite sense of form was needed, but a great and sincere spirit, an elevated and intrepid mind.

Looking back on that tremendous world mirrored in the Scottish ballads, one is tempted to exclaim, What a culture there must have been once in that narrow tract of land between Edinburgh and the Border, and what a tragedy it was that its grand conception of life as a thing of sin and enjoyment, of life and death, of time and eternity, realized in pure imagination, was turned by Knox and the Reformation into a theology and a set of intellectual principles! But Knox's work has been done; it has not been undone; and time alone will show whether it ever will be. Certainly only a people who saw life so intensely as a matter of sin and pleasure, of sin in pleasure and pleasure in sin, could have accepted with such passion a theology which saw life as a thing of transgression and damnation. There is something unswerving, and however we may dislike and deplore it, heroic, in the theology as well as the poetry of Scotland. A burning contemplation of things which take men beyond time made her equally the destined victim

of Calvinism and the chosen land of the ballads. But of that national tragedy it is idle now to speak. To those, however, who deny that a poetry so immediate as that of Scotland, so entirely without reflection, can be great human poetry and of value in a world in which so much of the dignity of the life of men is involved in the fact that they are capable of reflection, one can only say that a mighty reflection, or rather something more than a reflection, is implied in the very spirit of the ballads, a reflection on supreme issues which is unerring and absolute and has come to an end; a reflection not tentative, not concerned with this or that episode in a poem, with this or that quality, moral or immoral, or with the practicality or impracticality of life but of life itself, finally and greatly; a reflection which is a living vision of life seen against eternity: the final reflection beyond which it is impossible for the human spirit to go. In the Scottish ballads life is not seen, as it is seen so often in English imaginative literature, as good and bad, moral or immoral, but on a greater and more intense level, as a vision of sin, tremendous, fleeting, always the same and always to be the same, set against some unchangeable thing. In this world, so clear is the full vision that pity is not a moral quality, but simply pity; passion not egoistic, but simply passion; and life and death have the greatness and simplicity of things comprehended in a tremendously spacious horizon. It is idle to attribute this simplicity, which is a capacity for seeing things as they are eternally, to the primitiveness of the existence which the ballads mirror. Life was at that time, as it has been always, complex, a mystery not easily to be pierced. If one wishes to see what mere simplicity without an over-powering vision of life seen *sub specie æternitatis* can do, one can go in any case to the folk-ballads surrounding Robin Hood. But the Scottish ballads have something which ordinary folk-poetry has not, that great quality, that magnanimity about life, inadequately called philosophic, which Arnold found in Homer.

Whether the Scottish genius will ever return to some modified form of the ballad as its pre-ordained medium it is useless to consider to-day. Probably Scottish writers are fated hereafter to use English, and to use it, taking all things into account, not with supreme excellence. But it is difficult to avoid two conclusions: that the ballads enshrine the very essence of the Scottish spirit, and that they could have been written only in the Scottish tongue.

E. M. 17. i. 23.

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# A WORKING-CLASS ARISTOCRACY

THE present form of government in Russia might be fairly accurately described as a predominantly working-class oligarchy. Behind the transparent fagade of the Soviet Constitution all real political power rests in the hands of the Communist party, an organization of about 500,000 members. The Russian Communists are not a parliamentary political party in the ordinary sense of the term. They could not, for instance, be turned out of power without some sort of violent upheaval. Their grip on the organs of executive, legislative and judicial power is absolute. The elections to the All-Russian Soviet Congress invariably result in the election of eighty or ninety per cent of the Communist candidates, with a minority of sympathetic non-partisans and here and there a lonely Menshevik or Social Revolutionist. Party-members hold all the most responsible governmental positions. The highest courts, the so-called revolutionary tribunals, which alone possess the right to impose death-sentences, are dominated by Communists. In the economic field it is sometimes found necessary to employ in important posts politically neutral or hostile specialists and engineers; but there is always some more or less effective provision for Communist supervision and control. The new officers of the Red army are trained in special military schools, where they are surrounded with memorials of the civil war, given courses in the Marxist interpretation of history, and imbued in every possible way with an ardent faith in the ideals and achievements of the revolution.

The Russian Communists have built up one of the strongest political dictatorships in history. Organized opposition to it inside Russia at the present time has practically ceased to exist. It lies outside the scope of this article to analyse in detail the causes which have led to this dictatorship. It was brought into existence by the same factor which was responsible for the Jacobin dictatorship in France: the absolute necessity, from the revolutionary standpoint, of creating a powerful and ruthless centralized authority in order to cope effectively with the double menace of foreign invasion and domestic counter-revolution. It has survived far and beyond its

Jacobin counterpart, partly because of the flexibility of the Communists in accommodating their programme to changing circumstances and to the pressure of popular demand, and partly because of the extraordinary political apathy of the great mass of Russia's illiterate peasants. Putting aside the rather academic question whether there was a moral justification for the dictatorship (a question which every individual is certain to answer in accordance with his own sympathies and prejudices), it is my purpose to describe some of the outstanding characteristics of the revolutionary sect which now possesses full mastery over Russia's political faith.

The first thing that must impress every foreign observer of the Russian Communist party is its genuinely working-class character. According to the latest available statistics, 46.5 per cent of the party-membership is composed of manual workers, 24.2 per cent of office-workers, 24 per cent of peasants, and 5.3 per cent of members of other classes, including, presumably, Government officials and intellectuals. These figures do not, I think, give an adequate idea of the predominance of the manual workers in the Communist ranks. Many of the peasant Communists, for instance, are former factory-operatives who have gone back to their villages; and office-workers, especially those in responsible positions, are often hastily trained manual workers whose loyalty to the new regime is considered unquestionable. It would probably not be an exaggeration to say that at least two-thirds of the party-membership possess a background of industrial labour; and this in a country where the number of strictly industrial workers is less than one-tenth of the total population.

It is not only in the rank and file of the party that one finds this genuinely proletarian character. At least as high a proportion of former manual workers are to be found among the men who have risen to high positions on the wave of revolution. This fact was brought home to me very forcibly during a visit to the Ukraine. The President of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic was a metal-worker. The head of the Kharkov provincial Supreme Economic Council (the body regulating the local State industries) was a blacksmith. The Ukrainian Commissar for Justice was a Cossack farmer. The manager of a large textile-factory near Kharkov was a woman who had sweated out her youth in a Petrograd factory at a wage of three kopecks a day. These instances could be multiplied indefinitely. The fact that so many high posts are held by former workers and peasants has unquestionably

strengthened the hold of the Soviet Government on the loyalty of the Russian masses. Officials who come from the people, who dress and live, in most cases, little better than the ordinary worker or peasant, who are known usually for their work and their sufferings in the revolutionary movement, can demand sacrifices and survive blunders which would send a Government of business-men and middle-class politicians tottering to its fall.

At the same time a Government in which the most responsible posts are held by men who are learning their technique of political and industrial administration on the job, so to speak, labours under some obvious and appalling handicaps. That a rough working-men's party, a party led by strike-agitators and Marxist theoreticians, should have seized and held power, even without foreign interference, would in itself have been amazing enough. But the first three years of the revolution were marked by continuous foreign interference in the shape of armed intervention, blockade and subsidized counter-revolution. That the Communists should have developed sufficient military and administrative effectiveness to drive out the foreign invaders, to crush the counterrevolution at home, and to set their own power, after five years of difficult testing, on the firmest possible basis, is one of the most remarkable triumphs of sheer fanatical energy recorded in history. This triumph can only be understood in the light of the two most striking characteristics of the party: its discipline and its idealism.

The Russian Communists in their organization strongly resemble the Jesuits. In securing recruits they aim at quality rather than number; and for this reason the membership of the party has tended to decrease during the last two years. It is far from easy to secure admission to the party. Industrial workers are given preference over peasants and intellectuals as candidates; but even an industrial worker must first be recommended by three party-members in good standing and pass through a six months probationary period, during which time every step he takes is closely watched. If his conduct and theoretical knowledge are judged satisfactory, his application for membership is formally granted at the end of this period. He must then be prepared to leave all personal life behind him; his place of residence, his work, his manner of life are dictated entirely by the party. He may want to write poems or paint pictures; but if he is ordered to serve in the Red army

for propaganda-work or to collect the grain-tax in a refractory district, he must carry out his instructions unquestioningly.

The party constantly struggles to get rid of its unworthy and incompetent elements. Drunkenness and gambling are regarded as serious offences, and are liable to be punished with expulsion. Any pursuit of private gain is also a fatal disqualification, although under the new economic policy the Communist managers of nationalized industries are expected to drive as good bargains as possible for the State. Party-members convicted of corruption are not only expelled, but often shot. Lesser sins are more mildly punished. If, for instance, a party-member becomes what the Russians call bureaucratized, if he becomes overbearing and arrogant in the exercise of his power, he is likely to find himself sent to work in a factory in order to get a new baptism of the proletarian spirit. As a further means of self-purification, the party resorts to periodic cleansings, in which members who are considered to have fallen short of the highest standards of duty are expelled by tens of thousands. At the beginning of the last great cleansing, which took place in 1921, the Communist party in Russia (excluding the Ukraine) numbered 560,970 members. At the end of the weeding-out process 138,095, more than a quarter of the total membership, had been expelled. Of course no system of control is perfect; and it is undeniable that there are careerists in the Communist ranks who are clever enough to escape all the cleansings, while honest party-members are sometimes unjustly cast out. But in the main this policy of rigorous and constant self-examination saves the party from the danger of degenerating into a stagnant bureaucracy, and keeps it representative of the best character and intelligence of the Russian working-class. If the critics of the Communists can justly call their Governmental system an oligarchy, the Communists can reply with equal justice that it is also an aristocracy, an aristocracy not of birth or of wealth, but of merit.

Any new problem that comes up is discussed with the utmost freedom within the party-ranks. All the phases of the question are threshed out at public and private meetings, and the columns of the party-press are thrown open to prolonged and often heated debates. Parenthetically it must be observed that, while no opposition newspapers are tolerated in Russia, the Communists are quite unsparing in self-criticism whenever a case of corruption or incompetence is brought to light. Once a decision is taken by

either the party-executive or the party-congress, individual judgment is absolutely subordinated to the will of the majority. Whether the decision involves a new land-policy, a strengthening of the co-operatives or a carrying out of some new scheme of industrial organization, every party-member is bound to work for its success, regardless of his personal opinion about its advisability.

Such strict discipline as the Russian Communists impose upon themselves could only be the product of a compelling inner idealism. The prophet of their faith is Karl Marx, whose portrait can be found in almost every Government office, factory, and workers' club in Russia. Only a few of the Communist leaders are thorough Marxian scholars; but every member of the party must possess a rudimentary knowledge of the outstanding points of the Marxist doctrine.

The Communists are severely and dogmatically materialistic in their interpretation of history, politics, philosophy and human character. They lay tremendous stress upon the environmental factor in conduct. I recall vividly a long argument which I had with the editor of a Communist paper who insisted that Maxim Gorky's repeated shifts of attitude towards the revolution could be attributed to the circumstance that Gorky, having always been a casual labourer, never enjoyed the opportunity to acquire the disciplined collectivist will which comes from working with many other men in a large factory.

Any form of religious faith, like any form of nationalist feeling, is a bar to party-membership. The Communists are not philosophic sceptics or doubters; they are dogmatic atheists. In all their publications they drive home their firm conviction that God and immortality are bourgeois myths, invented for the purpose of enslaving the proletarian masses. The willingness of men who hold as a primary article of faith that death is the end of human existence, to give up their lives for their ideal should furnish an interesting subject of philosophic and psychological investigation. The Puritans, the Jesuits and the early Mohammedans all paralleled the courageous fanaticism of the Communists, but these groups were sustained by an intense, glowing faith in personal immortality. That Communism should exact equal sacrifices from its devotees without promising any similar definite compensation is an impressive testimony of the extent to which the Marxist economic theory has been transformed into a potent

spiritual force by the grime and rush and fatigue of the modern factory-system.

The Russian Communists are not revolutionary impossibilists of the type of Robespierre and De Valera. They will always compromise and retreat, rather than immolate themselves on a barren altar of devotion to some absolutely unattainable goal. Perhaps it is the predominance of realistic workingmen over doctrinaire intellectuals within the party-ranks that accounts for the fact that so much practical flexibility exists side by side with so much theoretical rigidity. The most striking demonstration of Communist realism was the adoption of the new economic policy, or, as the Russians call it, the Nep. The adoption of this policy, with its free trade, its relaxation of monopolistic management of industry by the State, its revival of money- and banking-systems, its toleration of open speculation and glaring material inequality—all this involved a most radical departure from the policies which had prevailed during the era of military communism and civil war. Some of the more tender-minded Communists could not reconcile themselves to the changes. Some of them withdrew from the party, a few of them despairingly committed suicide. But, once convinced by Lenin's arguments and by the still more cogent teachings of experience, that the Nep offered the only way of escape from economic catastrophe, the great majority of the party-members grimly set to work to ensure its success, while at the same time guarding as far as possible against its worst evils. So, on one hand, they permit full freedom of internal private trade, while combating excesses of profiteering and speculation by means of co-operative and Government stores. They lease factories which the State is unable to operate, holding the lessees to a strict observance of the labour-laws and to definite standards of production. They discount and tolerate an enormous amount of cheating and sabotage on the part of the old specialists and factory-owners, punishing the more flagrant cases of corruption with the firing-squad, but placing more reliance on the thousands of young workers whom they are already training in high schools and universities to be the "*krasnie spets*" (Red specialists) of the future. The older party-members spend every minute of their spare time in study, desperately struggling to make up for their lack of commercial and technical training in order that they may be able to compete with the new business-men of the Nep on something like equal terms.

In this connexion I remember one pale, harassed-looking Communist worker who had just been appointed financial controller of a very important State undertaking. Like nearly all the young and able-bodied Communists whom I met, he had served on several fronts in the civil war. Now he felt himself confronted with a more complicated problem than that of beating down Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch.

"Our old-time specialists cheat me right and left now," he said bitterly. "They bring me a paper to sign that seems quite proper on the surface; and then it turns out that I have given away some valuable concession which ought to have been kept for the State. I have always been a worker, and I never had a chance to learn much about finance. But now I stay up late every night, studying methods of auditing and accounting and control; and a year from now I do not think it will be so easy to cheat me."

Is the new economic policy, as the Communists themselves are honestly convinced, only a stage in Russia's progress towards their ideal of a classless State in which the enormous amount of energy that has always been expended on bickerings between capital and labour can be turned to more social and productive ends? Or will the Nep do what blockade and intervention could not do? Will Russia be imperceptibly transformed into a middle-class republic, with all the class-divisions and inequalities which might have existed under a Government headed by Miliukov or Kerensky? It is too soon, I think, to venture an answer to these questions. To-day one can find in Russia things which would seem to warrant either the gloomiest or the most hopeful prophecies about the country's future.

In the meantime, what can one say of this audacious band of working-class revolutionists, who fought their way from East Side tenements and Swiss *emigre* boarding-houses and Siberian prisons to the highest seats of power, who inaugurated the most advanced of social experiments in the most backward of European countries, who now occupy the paradoxical position of being at once the bogyman of foreign conservatives and the most sober constructive force working for Russia's economic restoration? A Western liberal is likely to be alienated at every turn by the dogmatic philosophy and the rough methods of the Russian Communist. Yet it is difficult to withhold a tribute of admiration to the daring of their faith and the scope of their achievement. With no military experience, they created the strongest army in Eastern Europe. With absolutely no practical

knowledge of political and economic administration, they not only ousted the former Russian privileged class from power, but also maintained the revolution against the intermittent assaults of the strongest military Powers of the world. They made energy and devotion a substitute for technique to a degree that seems simply incredible; and they are learning to become merchants and engineers with the same untiring zeal and application which they showed in making themselves soldiers and statesmen.

"The sacred madness of the brave." This is how Maxim Gorky, who perhaps saw as clearly as anyone both the good and the evil of the revolution, once apostrophized Lenin. However the Communist adventure may turn out, this phrase of Gorky's is worthy to stand as its historic epitaph.

W. H. C. 14. ii. 23.

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## A GRAND PROVINCIAL

ONE has only to look through a collection of old photographs in some Western State-house and note the lines of firmness and thought in the rugged faces of the pioneers and builders, to see the type of American of which the supreme example is Lincoln—who differed from the other men of his period in the degree of his idealism and power rather than in the cast of his mind. If one ask oneself whether any writer has evidenced in his work the character to which these men bore witness through their lives, one is made to pause. Whitman, Emerson and Mark Twain have each some of the qualities belonging to that period; and doubtless Whitman would to-day be regarded as its greatest representative. But although the expression of a people of Anglo-Saxon stock might naturally be supposed to come through literature, I believe that it is a painter who, by the quality of his art, with its excellences and its limitations, has given us the truest record of the America of his time. It is through this quality that one may best approach the pictures now at the Brummer gallery, and so realize the significance of the work of Thomas Eakins.

In person, the painter was of the type which he represented. His head was massive, his eyes clear and determined; his bronzed skin was that of a man who had faced rough weather, and his strong jaw was only half hidden

under the sparse, iron-grey beard. I once observed Mr. Eakins in conversation with his friend William M. Chase, and the contrast between the two was striking. The personal verve and distinction of the brilliant technician were arresting, even as his paintings were conspicuous in the exhibitions of his time. But the memory of the scene that comes back most vividly to me is that of the heavy figure of the older artist (older by only a few years, yet seeming of another generation), in whose slow, impassive gestures there was something of the depth and dignity of his art.

We have been long in realizing the importance of his work. It lacks the surface-charm of Whistler; it knows nothing of the soft sentiment that Americans like so much in George Inness, though perhaps the day for that is passing. Winslow Homer is of this sterner stuff, and perhaps it is through our growing appreciation of Homer that we are coming to understand the even more searching scrutiny of appearances that occupied the long life of Thomas Eakins. Eakins was a realist, but one must see him as more than that. His observation of men and things; his dissecting of cadavers, human and animal; his study of the natural sciences; his willingness to avail himself of photographs for his work; his patient, impersonal search after character; his severe and salutary work as a teacher; these are the facts about Eakins that until now have most impressed us. But they are not enough to explain the irrepressible rise in esteem that has lifted his work from the neglect that even the great exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum seemed for a time unable to overcome.

Were the qualities touched on above the only ones to be mentioned; were Thomas Eakins merely the sharp-eyed, strong-brained recorder of the physical or even the intellectual characteristics of the people and things he saw (and, in certain pictures, it is true, he does not rise above this level), we should not find him filling the high place which he holds to-day. There is a force in this painter that comes from his embodying—not copying—the character of his country and generation; and such a force finds expression in relations of form and space and light that are not to be accounted for as realism. They are universal and absolute, like the truths of mathematics; they are the abstractions that we know best in music and architecture, but which must underlie the representation of the painter or sculptor if it is to live.

A picture which shows this quality with special clearness is “The Swimming Hole.” Disregarding the questions of colour, of the minutiae of naturalism, and of the sense of out-door light—all of which may or may not be in a great picture, and yet have for too long kept us from perceiving what this artist has to offer us—disregarding these questions, there is, above all, the nobility of scale, the emphasis on the lines and masses that build up the work into a thing of large and harmonious proportions. This quality is basic, and it is evidence of Eakins’s intuitive understanding of the character of that America of the builders which finds so strong an expression in his art. Just as in a Roman portrait we see the character of the men who could conceive the great empire of that time, who could conceive the arch that traverses space with the invincible sweep of Rome itself, so every picture by Thomas Eakins is instinct with the forces that were sweeping the America of his day.

The admiration of the world of his time for the great thinkers and engineers is again and again celebrated by Thomas Eakins in his work, whether in pictures like “The Gross Clinic” and “The Agnew Clinic,” where actual episodes of the life of the scientists and teachers are shown in dramatic fashion, or in portraits of the man whom the artist preferred to characterize as “The Thinker.” Always there is the sense of the constructor about this painting; and the strength of Eakins’s art lies in the fullness with which his line follows the urge to mastery—physical or intellectual—of the men who incarnated the essential effort of his period. The youth who stands on the rock at the centre of “The Swimming Hole” is rendered with the energy of a Florentine; and in pose and buoyancy it contains more than a hint of the great “St. Christopher” of Pollaiuolo at the Metropolitan Museum. When one has perceived the quality, at once classical and yet contemporary, of the nude as represented by Thomas Eakins, one is better prepared to appreciate the splendid and dynamic balance attained in the portrait of Professor Leslie Miller. The realism of these pictures is their obvious feature, and has led some people to confuse the painter with those men who lose themselves in the maze of detail; but Eakins has the power to hold great masses in their essential and expressive directions even while painting wrinkles and hair, small reflections and exact textures.

The masculine character of his art concentrates on form as its medium. In the severity of his outlook, he is unconcerned with beauty of colour;

while atmosphere and its unifying function, its drawing together of isolated objects into harmonious ensemble, had no interest for this mind that was for ever trying to penetrate to the thing and its meaning, independent of the enveloping air and the glamour of colour. Even in the picture wherein Eakins most successfully essays the rôle of lyricist, the admirable canvas of "Benjamin Rush Carving the Allegorical Figure of the Schuylkill River," one feels that the mystery he imparts to the darkened space of the big studio is exceptional, and that the artist is most himself in making his carefully detailed statement about the central figure, the model. He is in harmony with the spirit of this scene of early American life, with the hint of decorum given by the presence of the chaperone; and he relishes the preoccupation with earnest work on the part of the three people. How all the literalness and the sobriety enhance the fresh and unexpected charm of the picture!

Critics have at times tried to establish a likeness between Eakins and some of the great French artists of the nineteenth century; but I think the attempt is more misleading than helpful. Eakins has nothing of the classicism of Ingres, the link between Raphael and Renoir. Neither has his realism the quality of Courbet's; for the work of this rough mountaineer of the Jura who seemed in his time to trample underfoot the gracious wisdom of French art, appears to-day only as the expression of an aspect of the genius of his country which had lain dormant. The architecture of Courbet's canvases, their colour—almost as restrained as that of Eakins, but still of the French school—and his instinctive use of design even while labouring at the problems of sight, all mark him as of that country whose ancient culture is never, apparently, to be carried beyond its borders by visitors from other lands. After Albert P. Ryder had drawn the inspiration for his art from the great dreamers and colourists of French Romanticism, he went back to American landscape and to Anglo-Saxon imagery in his imaginative pieces; with all his admirable qualities he would stand apart in a French museum. So also to-day, while we feel so confident that the work of Maurice B. Prendergast will bear comparison with the best of French painting after the Impressionists, we know that its roots are in our soil even if French sunlight brought it to maturity.

It was to the school-teachers of French art that Thomas Eakins addressed himself, and then only for his technical training. Yet even though he continued their method without radical change, one feels that he is

incomparably farther removed from the lifeless academism of the followers of Gerôme and Bonnat than he is from the other line of French artists who preserve the country's record of vital production. In reality, it is with neither group that we should identify him. The virtues of his works, as I have tried to show, are those of the life typified in his art, and the defects of the unsuccessful pictures are American defects. At times not even the powerful will of the man could lift him above the poverty and bleakness that are part of the American scene; and his painting is touched by the chill of it. At other times he seems to speculate on certain qualities of the old masters; and in reaching out for things that belonged to the opulence of the Venetians and the mystery of Rembrandt, his pictures show a certain confusion of purpose. Or perhaps, on the other hand, the intensity with which he fixes his eyes on form and character makes him forget that he is dividing his canvas into ungainly and ill-connected parts; a fault from which the instinct of an older culture would have saved him.

But the time has come when the sense of his limitations is dissipating, in our minds, through our grasp of his immense qualities. One jealously defends the autochthonic character of his art because one feels that we must have a solid native basis such as Thomas Eakins offers us, upon which we may build when we have mastered the European traditions we are slowly assimilating. With the passing of time, when Eakins seems as far away as Copley, our first great primitive, the figure of the old Philadelphian painter and teacher will take an ever higher place among American artists: his work, with its almost naïve self-reliance and its deep, homely truth, will take on a profounder beauty even than that which we see in it to-day.

W. P. 11. iv. 23.

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## NOCTURNE AT THE SPRINGS

WHEN I arrived at the Springs, the milky-green water of the pool was greying with twilight. The blackness that had already flooded the surrounding forest of cypress was spilling on to a pale, glassy surface ragged at the edges with umber, but still wanly alight at the centre where it stirred softly with sulphurous water welling from a subterranean source. The new foliage of the topmost branches of the western wall of cypress rose

out of deep gloom into a feathery silhouette against the dying light, a crest of dark spray on an overwhelming wave of night. Beneath, in the darkness, the croaking and wailing of insects, birds and beasts had not yet blended into the hubbub of nightfall. It was still possible to distinguish in the rising tumult the call of whippoorwills, screeches of owls, the falsetto of tree-toads, grunting of frogs and the distant, giant barking of alligators. How clearly and sweetly, like a clean tributary entering a muddy river, came flowing into this lewd din of the subtropical forest the first notes of the band, rehearsing in the dance-pavilion some melancholy, sentimental air—some Southern version of the American wood-note with a touch of humour in its crazy tempo and startling changes. From that direction, too, came frequent flashes of white light that shot into the Gothic obscurity of the cypress swamp; revealing for an instant the vine-draped, heavy-footed columns. The soft guttural of arriving motors died with each flare, and the laughter and shouting of boys and girls began to echo under the broad roof of the pavilion.

When I paid down my “four bits” at the entrance to the dance-hall, I was dazzled first by the harsh light of electric globes, and then by the blaze of intense colour along the benches and railings that enclosed the dance-floor. The place was thronged with youth and vivid with the brightest hues that youth could find to rival the garish spring season of this southernmost part of the United States. Scarlet, orange and sky-blue were the favoured colours in the brilliant rows along the narrow promenade; but here a fairylike, immature little body made a bright variation with Indian red, her chattering mouth a tiny, dancing flame of carmine; and there a pair of sullen eyes of negroid cast smouldered above vermilion lips, their furtive glances taking in the effect of the dancing frock of black chiffon, the scarlet sandals and stockings. When the gown was white, a broad fillet of hot colour atoned for it, and the usual high flush of rouge was heightened to a hectic spot beneath eyes bright with belladonna and anticipation of the dance. All these gaudy flowers were as heavily steeped in artificial fragrance as in colour, refusing to be outdone by the suffocating sweetness of night-blooming jasmine or orange groves in full bloom. As I made my way along the promenade, the air seemed almost visibly and palpably saturated with perfume.

Eagerness for the first number shone in all faces, showed in quickened gesture and in an acceleration of the customary drawling speech. Even the indolent and assured grace of the young men and boys was ruffled with impatience for the premonitory rattle of the snaredrum, the first wild ululation of the saxophones. Their long, slim feet drummed the highly polished floor; their lithe bodies, clad in tightly fitting jackets and trousers, shifted and twisted with stifled agitation; their sleek heads kept turning from partner to bandsmen. Finally their surcharged excitement exploded; a red-haired youth above the hum of a hundred mellow voices implored the band-leader: “Oh, Georgie, let’s go!” The band-master grinned, took in appreciatively the lovely, eager face that peered past the red-haired fellow’s shoulder, winked and shouted back: “Sittin’ pretty to-night, ain’t you Robert. All right, Sugar! I’ll give you somethin’ new I got in Tampa yesterday. Let’s go!” He nodded to the bored drummer whose sticks hung loosely in his limp, pale hands, and put the mouthpiece of his bull-saxophone to his full lips. The dancers stirred and arose from bench and railing like a flock of startled birds—a medley of blackbirds, bluejays, tanagers, orioles, cardinals—and before the twentieth beat of the music were crowding the floor to its barriers.

As they swept by me, each couple seemed to be improvising an extravagant burlesque of the modern dance. One couple waved their dark heads in time—the girl’s black hair tossed like the mane of a capering pony—and lifted their heels high with a defiant jerk; another pair swooped down until their knees all but grazed the floor, then leapt in the air with the swift grace of a cat after a bird; still another long-limbed couple seemed to be engaged in a wild duet of the double-shuffle; a wide-eyed, laughing two flung themselves into a calculated stumble from which they regained balance in violent pirouetting; some moved slowly about the room with the ghastly antics of locomotor ataxia, their feet twitching and halting along the boards; others seemed to be rapidly and vigorously wiping their feet on a crawling door-mat. All were closely embraced with a frank sensuality that seemed to be limited to the posture and motion of their bodies; for their faces were free from the suggested preoccupation, were gay and alert with mischievous smiles, arch glances.

The air to which they moved in perfect rhythm—as if they were controlled by a single mechanism beneath the band-stand—was the artless,

tenderly sad melody that the musicians had been rehearsing a while ago. It was, I suppose, a lyric of unrequited love or of homesickness for the South, but the favourite quality of erotic melancholy wailed on in undertone, submerged in the blatancies of jazz. Again and again the dancers demanded encores of this disguised expression of the sentimental sadness so dear to youth, and when at last the band-master waved them off the floor, they carried snatches of it out into the starlight. As they strolled along over the carpet-grass beneath a grove of live oaks at the back of the pavilion, or sat on benches by the darkened pool, I could hear their low voices lingering sentimentally over the simple *motif* that the finale had disentangled from the raging jazz.

As the evening wore on towards midnight, the note of dreamy romance vanished, and the obscene monotone and tunelessness of a more primitive lyricism held sway. Just as night had invaded the cool green bowl of the springs from the surrounding dismal fastness of cypress, so the hoarse clamour of the mating birds and beasts seemed to be conquering the sentimental mood of youth in the dance pavilion. The postures and movement of the dancers became extravagantly indecent. The elf in Indian red seemed to have swooned on the mountainous body of her blacksmith partner. Her thin, graceful, childlike arms were flung about the huge fellow’s ruddy neck and only the very tips of her tiny feet occasionally touched the floor as her gross support moved about with stately ease. His face wore a sleepy and lecherous expression, as if it had been at once lulled and incited by the orgiastic, tom-tom throb of the drums, by the insistent whimpering and screaming of the saxophones, by the heavy bass roar that the accompanist at the piano tore from the keys as he leapt upon them with crouching shoulders. The sweetish odour of moonshine exhaled from the stags along the railing, and the sheriff and his deputy slouched even lower against a disused bar; they eyed the corybantic scene with an ostentatious air of ennui which showed that they were becoming alert and anxious. Once they raised their backs simultaneously from the tarnished bar, and the three bloods who were about to come to blows over a girl in scarlet, observing this slight change of position, settled their disagreement without violence.

The hands of the clock above the bar were at right angles and closing upon midnight, when the red-haired youth again implored the band-master: “Oh, Georgie Boy! Give us those Caloosa-hatchee Blues for a strong

finish.” Wild shouts seconded his suggestion, the sleepy drummer brightened, the band-master grinned triumphantly: “Some tune, ain’t it, Honey? All right, Boys and Girls, for the very last time this evening and to be followed by ‘Home Sweet Home’—for the very last time, Children, those terrible Caloosahatchee Blues, rendered by Clive Davis and his renowned jazz artists of Osceola Springs. Let’s go!”

Ten minutes later, as the dancers clambered into their cars, whistling and humming the simple *motif* of their song of the South, the new moon rose above the sombre wall of cypress. Its silver blade broke in the softly boiling water of the pool, and above the deep, bawdy chanting of the forest a mocking bird trilled his sweet and comic interpretation of the Florida nocturne.

E. T. B. 18. iv. 23.

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## LESSONS OF REVOLUTION

I HAVE found few people in Ireland deeply concerned about the ethics of civil war or revolution. The majority accept the principle that it is lawful to use physical force in support of high ideals. Their questioning is about the justice of the cause; and, if that be admitted, they seem to think the right to use physical force to secure its triumph follows in logical and unquestionable sequence. I will not discuss the morality of civil war or revolution. I remember a man, tired of ideal ethics, who cried out at a meeting many years ago: “Let us hear no more of the good man or the bad man. Let us speak of the wise man and the foolish man.” I am like that man. I desire to question the wisdom of a policy rather than discuss the original rightness of a cause.

A policy is wise if, in operation, it secures the triumph of the idea. It is unwise if, in destroying opposition, it does not at the same time establish in the hearts of men the lovable and desirable life for which the struggle was begun. I think few disinterested thinkers dispute the moral justice of the ideals of the Russian revolutionaries who desired to bring about such a control and use of the natural resources of their country that none would be poor or hungry or neglected. Was the policy adopted wise as the ideal was right? Did it succeed? Could it have succeeded even if there was no

blockade or foreign intervention? Lenin and Bukharin have learned wisdom. They confess to great errors. Where lay the unwisdom?

Bukharin says it lay in this, that they provoked a revolution without the technical competence to realize their ideal. On the plane of physical force they won. On the intellectual plane they were defeated. Bukharin admits that, to save the economic situation, they had to restore the control of industry to the enemies of the revolution. Intellect, science, administrative ability, could not be improvised, being evolutionary products. The revolutionaries now fall back on evolution, and declare their hope lies in education. They begin again in the neglected sphere of culture.

The Irish revolution, which began in Easter Week, has also triumphed solely in externals. Our spiritual, cultural, and intellectual life has not changed for the better. If anything, it has retrograded. Nothing beautiful in the mind has found freer development. In so far as anything is done efficiently, it is done by administrators, educationists, officials and guiders of industry, who maintain, so far as permitted by circumstances, the habits engendered before the war for independence. The Anglicization of the Irish mind remains unaffected. The Gaelic movement was the one movement in Ireland with a truly national character. It began its work in the soul, not on the body. It inspired a few heroes to fight; but the transfer of energy to the plane of physical conflict weakened it; and now, when there is theoretical possibility of a Gaelic State, there are not Gaels in numbers and intellect competent to take control. The mass of people in the country continue to think as they did before the revolution.

If the Republicans succeeded in establishing a republic, the country would be as Anglicized as ever, because the Republic, no more than the Free State, could improvise culture, experience, intellect or administrative ability. It is practically certain that after a period of muddle—for their leaders have even less administrative experience that the Free State politicals—they would be forced, like the Russians, to fall back on the technical competents of the old order to prevent chaos. The Gaelic State can not be established unless there are Gaels in multitude to administer it. The momentum of the old order carries us along in Ireland, hardly deflected a hair’s breadth from the old cultural lines. It would carry us along despite the legal establishment of a republic—a purely external thing—just as that human momentum ignored the legal establishment of a Free State.

Inevitably also, after a victory brought about by the wreckage of the economic life of the people, the preoccupation of all with the work of material reconstruction would thrust all spiritual and cultural ideals out of sight. It would give people a sense of nausea to have them discussed. The moods by which high spiritual, political or cultural ideals are appreciated are engendered in times of peace. The Free State came into being with popular feeling stagnant. Why was this? Seven years of sensation had dulled the heart and made it insensitive. If a republic were proclaimed in Ireland next year or the year after, would there be any more exultation? I think not. Another year or two of civil conflict, and the heart would have been unhappy so long that it would have become fixed in sadness. The citizens would gaze with the same apathetic dulness on Republican deputies going to Dail meetings, that they now display when deputies attend the Free State assembly.

A deep mistrust exists in Ireland about the wisdom, character and intelligence of its politicals. As regards some of them this mistrust is, I believe, unjustified. In other times, these men might have won the rightly-placed confidence of the people; but they can not, and it is not their fault, win affection or excite enthusiasm in seared and cynical hearts. Our over-long employment of physical force has prohibited the spiritual genius from manifestation among the people. It has almost become atrophied from disuse. The triumph of spiritual or cultural ideals can not be brought about by physical force, but only by labours of the imagination and intellect. We have not laboured long enough in that field, and this is the cause of our failure in Ireland, of the moral depression, and why we seem immeasurably more distant from a spiritual nationalism than we were in 1914. We would not use the intelligence with which nature had so abundantly endowed us. We hated reading and thinking, like the old Turks. How many bookshops are there outside Dublin, Cork, and a few other towns? We have set up the machinery of self-government. The body is fashioned, but the Gaelic soul is incapable of functioning.

The champions of physical force have, I am sure without intent, poisoned the soul of Ireland. All that was exquisite and lovable is dying. They have squandered a spirit created by poets, scholars and patriots of a different order, spending the treasure lavishly, as militarists in all lands do, thinking little of what they squander save that it gives a transitory gilding to

their propoganda. With what terrible images have they not populated the Irish soul as substitutes for that lovable life! The very children in the streets play at assassination, ambush and robbery. Manhood maintains in new forms the spirit of the games of youth. What future lies before the present generation? Modern psychology, after long years of research and experiment, has come to attach the utmost importance to the images in the mind. Once an image is implanted, an energy latent in the being operates through the image, as the earth gives energy to whatever seed may be flung in the clay. If these are images of health, the energy works through the image and the body becomes as the mind. If these are images of despair, the body itself grows listless. But if the images are of assassination and destruction, what follows? Thoughts and moods breed true to type, as do birds and beasts and fishes.

Where is it to end? If it be lawful for a section of the people, simply because they hold their ideal to be the highest, to use force to impose that ideal on the rest, every other group may consider itself justified in following the precedent. Why should not the proletarians in Ireland, suffering far more than middle-class nationalism has ever suffered under British rule, also use physical force to upset a social order which has never brought them physical plenty or intellectual life? Why should not Catholics or Protestants, holding sincerely to the truth of their religion, make war on those who differ from them to prevent injury to immortal souls—surely worse than injury to bodies? I could name a dozen causes, all of which could be made to appear as shining in the sight of Heaven and humanity as the political idealism which is now wrecking Ireland. If politicians refuse the democratic solution of our troubles, if they insist on force, we will have proletarian wars and religious wars. Does not recent history show how easy it would be to excite such passions, how ready they are to flare up with an accompaniment of burning houses? The end of it all would be that the most ruthless militarism would conquer; and how long might it be before the tiniest flower of the soul could push up through that ice to begin a new spring in the heart?

We can establish Irish nationality only by building in the heart and the imagination. When we fight, we level life to that of the primitive savage, before the imagination had built up the high poetry, arts, architecture and sciences, which make civilization and distinguish race from race. We extinguish national characteristics, for there is no difference between killers

in any country. They are all beasts for the time being—Russians, Germans, French, English, Irish—all the same. It is easy for a nation to break with its past in a few tragic years. The Great Famine made such a break in Irish life. The heart was too dead to grow its flowers, and beautiful traditions and customs withered with human life out of memory. The civil conflict which is devastating Ireland, if it does not end speedily, will part us from what was saved of lovable national life and character. In the Apocalypse, a spirit blows a trumpet, and a third part of life perishes. Another trumpet is blown, and the waters of life turn bitter, and men die because of the bitterness. These images might stand for the tragedy which is past, and for the tragedy which is to come.

I can not understand the faith of those who act on the belief that a nation is immortal and can survive any strain. Nations are no more immortal than individuals. The dust of the desert is over great cities whose inhabitants loved their country with no less a passion than Irish nationalists have loved theirs. Earth is dense with traditions of perished nationalities. If a nation is like a dissolute youth who impairs his vitality by excesses, it will perish as surely and by as inexorable a law of life as the debauchee. There comes a point where recovery is impossible. Something—a skeleton or larva—may survive, but not the nation with confident genius. There will always be herdsmen to look after the bullocks; but the genius of the Gael, if this conflict continues for much longer, will have vanished from its place of birth. The curious in psychology may seek to trace a flash of character here and there in some state of the new world to a possible Gaelic ancestry—

a phrase,
As in wild earth a Grecian vase.

G. W. R. 25. vii. 23.

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## MRS. HARTIGAN AND THE “TITANIC”

ACCORDING to Mrs. Hartigan, it was “the Titanic’ began it all.” Mrs. Hartigan is the lady to whose ministrations my disorderly bachelor apartment is indebted for what “service” it receives. Her own understanding of the term is elastic and a little erratic, but he would be a braver man than I

have ever been who attempted to impose bounds on it. It appears to include the disappearance of sundry shirts and socks on Saturday and their reappearance, darned, washed and re-buttoned the following week, not to mention cakes of fresh soap and plump tubes of tooth-paste where harsh alkaline shreds and coils of twisted lead foil had been before. “Men is forgetful,” comments Mrs. Hartigan. Her hand is feeble, her foot slow, but her back is still straight as a ramrod, her black hair only streaked with grey, and her blue eye untamed and piercing. I can imagine a day when her love was stronger than death, her hatreds deeper than the grave.

No Irish like her are born into the world to-day. She has seen the king of the fairies himself, the time she swooned with the pain was in her hand, dancing in rage round the stone stood up in the rath so fast he looked like a red streak. She has heard the “gentry”[1] skirling and singing under the moon inside Sir Humfray Daly’s lodge-gates the night the young lad was drowned in New Zealand or them parts. Like many of the older Irish in America, her sense of tradition between the old world and the new is rather misty. She will tell, with an equal sense of ransacking a remote and colourful past, how the ——th Regiment marched down the Avenue to the war in Virginia that stole the chasuble off their chaplain’s back. She belongs to the older exodus, when the emigration was made *“en famille”* and the exiles were spared the sharpest pang of all, which is separation from the beloved. Such, at any rate, is Mrs. Hartigan, who believes the trouble started with the “Titanic.” When I tell her she must mean the “Lusitania,” she shakes her head and intimates, but without discourtesy, that she knows whereof she is speaking. It was the “Titanic,” she insists, that “broke the luck of the English.”

I sometimes wonder whether, in her transcendental Celtic twilight, Mrs. Hartigan has not groped upon a truth hidden from the practical mind. When one thinks back a little, one is struck with the comparative immunity from tragedy of the English race. Kipling is fond of telling us that “if blood be the price of admiralty” the English have paid in full. But they have really not paid for their abounding success in anything like the same measure that other races have paid for ambitions that came to naught. There is as yet no British Varus or Crassus. History records no British “Invincible Armada.” No colonial venture of hers has ended as tragically as Adowa. There have been regrettable incidents, disastrous battles—Mai wand, Majuba, the

Kabul retreat. But, somehow or other, the sense of fighting against great odds, the heroism that casts a halo over defeat, has always been at hand to spare the race the shadow of national humiliation and shame, the Claudine Forks through which other peoples have had to pass. Even in the natural order a sentiment has arisen, which I would not call altogether fanciful, that great disasters avoid territory over which the Union Jack flies. I remember the comment of a despondent French acquaintance when the top of Mont Pélée blew off, erasing St. Pierre with its ten thousand inhabitants from the face of the earth. *"Ces choses-là n'arrivent jamais à vous autres."* On the seismological face of things there was no good reason why the catastrophe should not have had Barbados or St. Kitts for its theatre. But "these things don't happen to you." The luck of the English!

If the "Titanic" really broke the spell, it broke it in a way that hurt. There was heroism aplenty in the dark moments that followed the crash on the iceberg. In its supreme trial the race showed true to form. Yet the story shows no signs of becoming a national tradition side by side with the deathless epic of the Birkenhead. I wonder why. Is its memory felt to be, on the whole, rather disquieting than heartening? Is there something in the rush of the doomed liner, at record-breaking speed, with feasting and merriment under decks, through ice-infested seas, that is "un-English," that rings false to the tradition of competence, common sense and foresight on which the Empire has been built? Is it too distressingly like other disasters, suffered by other and "lesser breeds without the law"? Does it, for the first time, seem to range the Englishman, stolid, phlegmatic, apart, with races that admit the vertiginous attraction of fatality?

Two years later, in the last days of July, 1914, when all Europe was racing through the night to destruction, there were, perhaps, a few hours during which the fate of the world lay in the hands of a British Foreign Minister, and when the word that a Canning or a Palmerston would have spoken on instinct, might have spared civilization the blackest and most irremediable chapters in its history. To fancy that the word might have been uttered if, at a certain moment more than two years previously, a steersman, under orders from the bridge, had swung the wheel of the "Titanic" to port or starboard, is a conception too fanciful for utterance. To propose Captain Smith and Sir Edward Grey as two links in a chain of causation is a feat from which the most bigoted disciple of Hegel would recoil. Yet never is

the conviction that I am standing in the presence of imponderables so strong upon me as when an ancient Irish lady, who has seen and heard the fairies, tells me that “it was the ‘Titanic’ began it all.”

H. L. S. 22. viii. 23.

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## THE CHICKEN-WOMAN AND THE HEN-MAN

I HAD just moved into my summer cottage on the bank of a lake in northern Michigan, when a large, angular, raw-boned woman drove up to my door.

“I am Mrs. Peel,” she said. “I live in the village. I raise chickens, and would like to supply you.”

“Very well,” I answered, pleased to have chickens brought to me instead of going to outlying farms to get them, “you may bring some every Saturday.”

Promptly, every Saturday morning, Mrs. Peel appeared with the chickens, received her money, and departed. She was a dour-faced woman. Her heavy iron-grey hair was brushed tightly back and twisted into a knot, above which set, or rather stood, a straight-brim black hat, trimmed with a faded bunch of lilacs. Her dress, of faded brown sateen, was full in the skirt; the tight-fitting basque buttoned down the front; new sleeves had replaced the old, and these were several shades darker than the rest; neither collar nor cuffs relieved the sombreness of her attire, but the high neck was fastened with a quaint agate brooch. Her feet, clad in heavy, flat, black shoes, looked determined as she deliberately climbed back into her wagon.

One Tuesday I wanted a couple of chickens, so I drove into the village and stopped at Mrs. Peel’s house. It was a wooden building which had once been brown. There was a door in the centre, and the dirty windows were bare. There was no ornamentation inside or out. The veranda was covered with dust, the boards rotting, tufts of grass growing in the corners, and neglect was evident in every feature of the place. I knocked—no answer; again—no answer. I looked through the curtainless window into the parlour-bedroom which seemed to be the only habitable room in the house, except the little lean-to kitchen in the rear. Then I pounded on the door. Mrs. Peel appeared promptly from the lean-to.

“Can you let me have a couple of chickens to-day?” I asked.

“No, I can’t,” with a disappointed air, “mine are running loose. I can only catch them when they are shut up at night.” Then, hopefully, “To-morrow won’t do?”

“No, I’m sorry, but I want them to-day.”

“Well, maybe Mr. Peel can let you have them. I’ll run over and see. He lives just around the corner. Set down on the stoop there and wait for me.”

I sat on the “stoop,” idly meditating, “Peel—Peel; two people by the same name.” She returned in a few minutes: “Yes, Mr. Peel says you can have them. They’ll be ready in half an hour. He lives in a little house, the second one, just around the corner.”

I found “the little house, the second one, just around the corner.” It was nothing but an unpainted shanty but, all about, restrained by a wire netting, were scores of chickens, so I decided that this must be the place. I knocked at the door and, as it opened, my glance took in the interior; one room, not more than twelve feet square, an uninviting-looking pallet on the floor, a kitchen table, a kitchen chair, and a small oil-stove, with some hooks and a shelf above it for the food and cooking utensils; this was all the room contained.

“Is this Mr. Peel?” I asked, and my eyes travelled down to the man in the doorway before me. He was very small, with a twisted protruding hip, and his arms were too long for the rest of his body, but he had the merriest blue eyes I have ever seen. His face and hands were just the colour of his khaki shirt and trousers, which were not too clean, and from the former of which several buttons were missing. He doffed his once-white straw hat, and replied: “Yes, and your chickens are all fixed.” Then, in an anxious tone, “I’ve some mighty fine hens, good for soup; wouldn’t you like some?”

“Yes, I would. You might bring me a couple the last of the week.” His face lighted up: “I’ll bring ’em Saturday.”

The next Saturday, and many Saturdays thereafter, Mrs. Peel brought me my chickens, and Mr. Peel brought me my hens. They came together in the same antiquated spring wagon. They sat, side by side, on the springless seat; she, with the reins in her hands, towering above the mild creature who seemed to shrink away, and look more insignificant than ever in contrast. She took her money and he took his, and then she climbed back into the wagon, lifted up the reins, and seemed to wait impatiently until he gaily

clambered up beside her. Off she drove without, as far as I could see, indulging in any conversation with the merry-looking gnome at her side.

"Curious," I would murmur. "Her name is Peel; his name is Peel; I wonder what relation they are. He's her brother-in-law, perhaps." For awhile, this tentative solution satisfied me but, one morning, when she had climbed into the wagon, and he stood just below the porch making change, my curiosity suddenly got the better of me.

"What relation are you two?" I asked. He looked up at me, and his eyes danced.

"You want to know what relation we be?"

"Yes." Then, after a glance over his shoulder, to make sure that Mrs. Peel was out of ear-shot, he raised himself to his tiptoes, and answered me thus: "Well, we war husband and wife, but we hain't none."

"You 'war husband and wife but' you 'hain't none,'" I weakly echoed. "How do you make that out?" Only the balustrade of the porch prevented his coming still closer as, with another glance over his shoulder at the occupant of the wagon, he whispered: "Divorced."

This was certainly a surprise to me, for I had not supposed that divorces had penetrated to this simple little hamlet: "Well, you seem to be on very friendly terms for a divorced couple. That's all I can say."

Then, in his ordinary voice, which was a bit wistful and appealing, and seeming to take delight in the thought that she *might* hear, he said: "Oh, she's all right as a neighbour, but a damn bad wife. And, besides, it's cheaper to take her round with my horse and wagon and get her trade than to pay her alimony."

For several years this went on. In fact, it came to be a family joke. "The Peel wagon is at the door. It must be Saturday," we would often remark. Other times I rarely saw Mrs. Peel. She seemed to spend most of her time "back of the house"; but I saw Mr. Peel frequently. Always, he snatched the battered old straw hat off his head, and he greeted me with a strange twinkling smile, for all the world as if he were guarding a secret, and chuckling over it. I often wondered what that secret was.

A summer came when Mrs. Peel brought me the chickens and the hens. I did not see her but, in the kitchen, she dropped the laconic remark: "He's dead." This was the only time she ever mentioned him, but from the villagers I learned a little more about him. He had lived, summer and

winter, in his little shanty, with only a kerosene stove for cooking and heating. His chickens ran in and out during the summer and, if one were ill during the winter, he took it in and warmed and tended it. Early one bitterly cold morning, neighbours saw flames in the direction of his hut, but they reached it too late. Underneath the embers they found what was left of Mr. Peel. Then they told me that "Mrs. Peel had a tidy sum put away and wouldn't let him get hold of it, but did let him use her horse and buggy, and often drove him to and from his customers." Perhaps this was the secret that he chuckled over. It may have pleased him to give me the impression that he was conferring the favours.

When next I saw Mrs. Peel, the faded lilacs on her hat had been replaced by a new black bow, and I thought she appeared a little less aggressive.

H. SW. 19. ix. 23.

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## ZACHARIAH JONES

AS we stepped into the rowboat, I looked out over the lake; apple-green it was, without a ripple, and crossed from shore to shore with broad bands of purple. On the closely-wooded shores the trees appeared purple, while those along the hill-tops seemed quite black. Only the open fields were green, except where the ripened grain stood in great golden patches. Above, great masses of fleecy white clouds floated in the clear blue sky.

"What does it matter if the fish don't bite on such a day as this!" I said to my small son, William.

"But the fish gotta bite," said Zachariah Jones. "See this minner?" holding up a lively chub, with which he deftly baited my hook.

"Why, yes. What splendid bait you have to-day!"

"Yep. Caught'm down stream. Fished all night for'm. Hed ter ketch ev'ry one on hook. Water too high ter use net. Nebber got home till four 'clock'n mornin'."

"Well, you didn't have much time to sleep, did you?"

"Sleep? Fer two hours? That'd just been a 'naggravation. Nope. Routed th' old woman out'n made her hoe pertaters with me till time get breakfus'."

Zack, as he was commonly called, never used two syllables where one would do. He had an impediment in his speech. Some might say it was a hare-lip; but it wasn't a hare-lip. Others might say he was tongue-tied; but he wasn't tongue-tied. He had an impediment in his speech, and without this impediment, Zack would not have been Zack.

Zack skilfully cast the minnow, then turned to bait the other hook. For years he had been our fishing companion. I had watched him grow from childhood to boyhood, from youth to manhood. He took an interest in the entire family, and had taught the boys to fish and shoot. What happy hours we spent listening to Zack's tales of fishing and hunting; and how the children's eyes bulged until they realized that Zack's stories were never meant to be believed! Their sole purpose was to amuse. No work was too hard for Zack and his brothers. They trapped muskrats and sold the skins; caught whitefish through the ice; shot ducks, partridges and prairie chickens; chopped down trees and sawed them into fire wood. This they did for a livelihood during the winter. During the summer they subsisted on fish —and us. They were boys of fine habits, and their speech, though uncouth, was never unclean. In his youth Zack was lean, but strong and sinewy. He had a shambling gait; his shoes looked roomy enough for two pairs of feet. He was indescribably awkward, always choosing the most difficult way to achieve his object. He would jump from the launch into a rowboat, land upon a loose cushion on the seat, and fall sprawling to the floor. He was always the first to reach shore. Usually, in his haste, he would clamber up the bank with his arms full of packages, and, the loose soil giving way beneath him, would fall back on the beach almost covered with sand, pebbles, cooking-utensils, etc. His hands were usually ornamented with strips of adhesive plaster. Zack always fished in his shirt-sleeves and vest, in every sort of weather. His vest pockets were full of fish hooks and guimps, while his trousers' pockets bulged with knives, wires, strings, and even live frogs, which he sometimes used for bait.

Silence reigned for some time, broken only by the thud of the minnow as the line was cast, or the swish as we pulled it through the water. Suddenly, a rapt expression on Zack's face drew my attention to Will.

"That's a fish sure," said Zack. "Give 'm plenty o' line. Steady, steady! Now jerk 'm! Don't give 'm no slack. Keep'm com'n. Keep'm com'n."

Will's face was flushed as he rapidly pulled the line in, hand over hand.

“There! Let’m run—give’m line. Hold’m steady now er he’ll fool yer. Fish knows more ’bout boys’n boys knows about fish. Soon’s he stops runnin’, pull’m in quick!”

Will obeyed implicitly. The fish appeared on top of the water.

“Keep’m comin’. Keep’m comin’,’’ in great excitement; and Zack’s huge brown hand shot out and grabbed the fish. He proceeded to extract the hook with a running commentary: “Fine fish, Bill. Yer landed’m cause yer done jest what I tole yer. What d’ye think happened th’ other mornin’? I was woke up by ’norful noise in my curcumber patch. Went down there’n foun’ two pick’rel, fatter’n this’n, layin’ on ther sides *dead*. They’d et up mos’ all my curcumbers’n jes’ rolled over’n died with indergestion.”

Although this was said in the most serious manner imaginable, it brought the never-failing laugh with which Will greeted all Zack’s stories. Zack smiled contentedly and went on with his work.

A sudden breeze brought the white-caps dancing about us, and I looked up to find the white clouds turned to grey and purple and the trees rustling and quivering.

“Storm’s comin’,” said Zack, “ov’r Bramleigh way—comin’ pret’ fast. ’Most dinn’r time, en’way. Bett’ go in.” Without a by-your-leave he lifted the anchor and rowed to shore.

Zack was a famous cook; he took great pride in dressing the fish and cooking them over a glowing bonfire, always giving us the benefit of his comments: “See that knife? Ain’t none like it. Bes’ steel, sharp’s razor. Don’t lend that t’ nobody. Nope. Takes skin off ’n leaves fish jes’ like shinin’ silver. See?” He held the fish in his hand underneath the water. It did gleam like silver.

Usually Zack preferred to eat the cold meat which we brought along. One day we had a particularly fine piece of rare roast beef. Seeing him heap his plate with fish, I said: “Zack, why don’t you take a piece of the roast beef?”

“When I want m’ meat *raw,*” was the scornful reply, “I’ll eat it right off’n th’ block.”

He took a keen interest in all that went on; sometimes even joining in the conversation as he passed the coffee, fish, potatoes and corn: “Yer corn aint’s good’s las’ year. Nex’ week I’ll bring yer some’r mine. *That’s corn”;* or “We miss Dor- ’thy this year. Couldn’t she eat more corn’n en’one ye

ever seen?" with a laugh; or "Say, Mis' Leslie oughter be here. Gee! wasn't 't funny when she nearly fell in aft'r that fish sh' lost?"

One day we were discussing my cousin, who was coming to make us a visit. Bob was an ardent fisherman and had fished many times with Zack. Zack listened with a satisfied smile, but made no comments until after luncheon. Then, as we began to fish, he commenced: "I'm orful glad Bob's comin'. Like Bob; he ain't like some er them city fellers," in a tone of contempt, "thinks they knows it all! Why, some of 'em comes up here'n thinks all they gotter do's to throw minner in th' water to ketch fish; just like it was wheat pit where all the yaps'r waitin' to take hook. It's harder to ketch fish'n to make money. Bob's diff'rent."

"Zack," said my small boy, who was particularly strong on the proprieties, "don't you think it would be better to call him Mr. Mansfield instead of Bob?"

A look of astonishment passed over Zack's face: "Mitta Man'field! Mitta Man'field! Why would I call him Mitta Man'field? Nobody nebber call me Mitta Jones."

He was quick to do a kindly deed for those he liked. He overheard me say, one day, that I had seen a beautiful red honeysuckle and wanted one for my wild-flower garden.

"Tell me where't is 'n I'll get it for yer."

"But you can't. It is growing on the fence at Cedar Crest Farm."

"Huh, yer show me where 'tis 'n when Mitta Cedar Crest gets up'n mornin', he won't fin' nuttin' but hole in ground." I did not describe the location, but a week later he brought me a fine red honeysuckle.

The natives watched us with observant eyes. Any feeling of superiority which they thought they detected in a "summerer" was fatal to that "summerer's" happiness. Here, as in most American hamlets, each person thought everybody was as good as anybody else and perhaps *he* was a little better. 'Them summerers is all right," they were fond of saying, "s'long's they don't put on no airs with us." One autumn morning a neighbour's barn burned down, and I said to Zack: "A pity, wasn't it?"

"Yep," in an indifferent tone.

"How do you think it happened?"

"Well, I do' wanta say nuttin' 'gainst Mitta Mawton, but he tried to sell th' place; had lot of 'surance on it'n—well, I do' wanta say nuttin' 'gainst

Mr. Mawton but" and now he seemed almost to explode in his excitement, "if that'd a happened to me *I'd a bin in penitentiary 'fore now."*

Some years before we were amazed to learn, upon our arrival, that Zack had married. I can not tell why it seemed so indescribably funny to us; but marriage had never entered into our scheme of life for him. But so it was. Zachariah Jones was married. We recalled his superior attitude when his brother had married the preceding year.

"Suppose you'll be the next to go," I had said to him.

"Nope. When a man's single he does what he wants. When he's married he can't do nuttin'." So we chaffed him.

"Zack, I hear you're married."

"Yep."

"How do you like it?"

"I dunno."

"You don't know? How strange!"

"Well, I nebber bin inside church 'n all m' life 'till I got married. Hed t' go t' church t' get married. Nebber had doctor'n m' life 'till I got married, 'n 'en got sick, hed t' have doctor." It was a long speech for Zack, and he kept on muttering something that sounded like "Dunno whether like it'r not."

"Cheer up, Zack. Better times are coming. You look well-fed. The wife must be a good cook."

"Yep," and he lapsed into silence. He did look well-fed, and prosperous, for he had not only put on flesh, but he had a gleaming gold front tooth. But much of his cheerfulness and ready humour were gone.

"What is the matter, Zack?" I said to him very seriously.

"Nuttin'"; then after a long pause, "Can't sleep. Lay 'wake nights thinkin'! Nebber did that afore. Bein' married's nuff to make a feller think." But I wasn't satisfied. I wondered if they got along well, what his thoughts were, and how he looked on life. I missed the frank and ready smile of my fishing companion.

Another year passed and the first bit of news we received on returning to the country was that Zack had a bouncing boy several months old.

"Fine boy," he said, "Yes, sir! Named'm fer Bill, 'cause he's finest boy I know. Willum Man'field Junior Jones. But I tell ye, I mos' lost th' old

woman. Why I couldn't eat 'r sleep las' summer. Sure thought she was er goin' to die." After that Zack expanded.

"Yep. Th' old woman cooks good 's me. Keeps th' house good too. Y'ought t' see how clean she keeps th' boy, an' I don' care if sh' does bring'm up t' go t' church." Then, "Say, I gonna take yer to th' head er the lake n' show yer where them red-wing blackbirds builds their nests. Ever seen 'em? Jest 'bove th' water on th' reeds en' they rocks jes' like a baby's cradle."

Now Zack's ambition seems to be realized, for "Willum Man'field Junior Jones" is guide and fisherman. He is more taciturn than his father, but, as Zack says, "Times is changed 'n people isn't what they used to be."

H. SW. 26. ix. 23.

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# THE MAIDEN DEW

(*Translated from the Polish by Stanislava Piotrowska.*)

THERE was at Ludimier, near the river Black Dunajec, a monastery of Cistercian Brothers. It was the *wojewoda*, Ivo Cedro, who established it; and when he did so, a little devil peeped over his shoulder. One could see it even on his picture hanging behind the altar in the church.

In the monastery was a certain young monk, named Augustin. He was most ardent in his faith, and very severe with pagans. The peasants in that country were full of sin, and if anyone called to them, “May Jesus Christ be praised!” they would answer, “Praise him yourself, if you have time to spare.” So, one day, Brother Augustin said to the abbot, “Reverend father, I shall go out and convert these people.”

“But where?” asked the abbot, stroking his stomach. He had just had a nice salmon for supper.

“Up in the mountains.” Brother Augustin pointed from the Maryanski hills up to the great Tatra.

“Pooh!” shouted the abbot. “Brother Paul and Brother Jacob went there and they never came back. We do not even know, may the Lord give light to their souls, where their unburied bodies lie. Wolves ate them or robbers killed them. They may even have suffered a martyr’s death, and the monastery might have become famous for ever through them. Already the Dominicans reproach us for not producing enough saints. Whom would you convert out there? Those robber-mountaineers, among whom we can hardly live? I can not complain: there are game, deer, hares, stags; there are mushrooms, berries, martens, and lapwings’ eggs for Lent; there—there are — But people! Let the devil convert them! It is hard enough to live with them, the thieves! Thank God, they have never dared to rob the monastery yet. By St. Kunegunda and St. Remigeus our protector! Better to leave the church to God’s care and the monastery to owls and crows! Szczyrzyc is a nice place——”

“O, it is not right to speak thus, it is not, reverend father!” cried Brother Augustin. “The more difficult the task, the greater the glory. Let me go,

reverend father. I feel God’s voice calling me and the spirit is stirring within me.”

Finally the abbot permitted him to go. He dared not disobey God’s voice, but he tried to justify himself before the sacristan: “He told me that the spirit is moving within him.”

“Perhaps so,” answered the sacristan. “Yes, I dare say it is. But I don’t know. In my time, it was called by a different name.”

One morning in May, with the rising of the sun, when the air was fresh and laden with the scent of blossoms, Brother Augustin went forth from the monastery-gate. He carried nothing in his hands wherewith to defend himself, nor was he even followed by one of the coarse-haired dogs which the monks bred. He went forth serene under the protection of the Providence that inspired him.

He crossed the Dunajec, and followed the rocks in the direction of the second fork in the river. The forest began a little farther on. There were a few settlements in it. Singing hymns, with a scapulary on his breast and a rosary in his hands, Brother Augustin proceeded on his mission to convert the heathen.

Terrible beasts crossed his path, wolves, wild boars of enormous size, bears as big as cows; but he passed them safely through faith. For half a day he walked through the forest without meeting a soul. But just at noon he heard the clap of hands and a woman’s voice singing. He rejoiced. He thirsted to begin his holy task; besides, he was already longing for the sight of human beings. He walked in the direction of the voice.

Already he heard quite plainly the words: “I’ll go, I’ll go on the river to-night!”

Among the trees he saw a meadow in which were several barns surrounded by an embankment, behind which were flower-beds. There were cultivated fields nearby with oats, cabbages and other crops which looked fresh and green. A young girl of about seventeen years was kneeling by the stream, washing shirts and beating them with a wooden stick. Several of them were stretched on the shore in the sun. She wore a white linen handkerchief bound under her chin, an open blouse showing her young breasts, and a linen skirt tucked up to her knees. Her sleeves were rolled up above her elbows.

The priest emerged from the trees. At the sight of him the girl got up quickly and raised the stick ready to strike him.

“May Jesus Christ be praised!” cried the priest, and involuntarily his eyes lingered on the open blouse.

“What do you want?” shouted the girl sharply.

“I praise God.”

“God?” The girl looked at the monk and lowered her arm. “He is not harmful, and he is handsome,” she thought.

“But what do you want?” she asked more softly.

“I bring God.”

“God does not need you to bring him. If he wishes, he will come himself.”

The priest approached the girl who, seeing his slender figure, regarded him with kind pity rather than fear.

“Who are you? Where do you come from? Do you want something to eat?”

“I ate berries in the forest and I brought cheese and bread with me. May God reward you. I come from the monastery at Ludimier, bringing the true God.”

“I have told you already that God does not need you to bring him. So, you are from the monastery? I know. You can not go with girls nor have a wife. Yes, I have heard about that.”

“O no——no——”

“Poor thing! How could you stand living without love? Perhaps it was just on that account that you ran away?”

The priest was offended, but restrained himself.

“O young pagan,” he said meekly, “he who gives his whole life to the Lord God, his holy Son and his Mother, the holy Virgin Mary, can not know any other kind of love.”

“What you say sounds very queer,” said the young girl; “you can easily confuse me. What sort of a God is this who has a son? And this Mary, or whatever her name is—she wasn’t married then? So they had the son together? Well?”

“I shall explain everything to you, young pagan,” said Brother Augustin. “What is your name?”

“My name? Dew. But people call me Little Dew.”

“Dew?”

“Yes, I am named after the dew.”

“Then listen, Little Dew, my child—” the priest began.

“Your child? But you are only a child yourself. I don’t think you are much older than I am.”

Brother Augustin approached the stream and sat on a stone.

“Are you tired?” asked Little Dew.

“I walked a long way.”

“Then rest a little. But you are not hungry, are you?”

“No, but listen, Little Dew, my child in Christ. What do you believe in?”

“Me? What could I believe in? The Weather and the Mischief, the Verdant Goddess, and the Goddess of Flowers, of Plague, of Showers, of Hail and Thunder. O, there are enough different gods, but above them all is Time.”

“By God’s name!” cried Brother Augustin. “So you are a true pagan!” He started to cross himself as though to send away the devil.

“What are you doing?” asked the girl in surprise. “Why do you swing your hands so fast?”

“I am crossing myself in God’s name, to drive the devil from me and from you. Did you really never hear about the Christian God?”

“Which is he?”

“He who rewards the good and punishes the evil. He whom one must praise and ask him——”

“Does he always give?”

Brother Augustin thought a while, then answered: “According to his will.”

“I usually ask only when I know it is not in vain.”

“He who created heaven and hell.”

“I know heaven; but hell?”

“Where burn the souls of people damned for ever!”

“Who are those people damned for ever?”

“Those who do not worship him.”

“Is that so? Then your God likes to take revenge. Well, but what is to be done to obtain his grace?”

“It is necessary to give up all the vanities of life.”

“Which are they?”

“Those created by the devil.”

“The devil? Still, he is always nearer to man.”

Brother Augustin sighed to himself. “They have heard of the devil here before they heard of God.” Then aloud he said, “One must for the love of God give up all earthly pleasures.”

“What! I am to give up dancing because of some god? Why, our gods are ready to dance with us themselves.”

“One must mortify the body, fast, flagellate, wear haircloth, sleep on the bare ground.”

“Oh,” cried the girl, much shocked. “I don’t want even to hear about such a god!”

Brother Augustin paused and thought. “She must be a very hardened pagan. She has no idea of the holy Catholic religion. To convert and save this soul is my duty. But it is first necessary to learn in detail all her mistakes and heresies.” He asked, “What are your gods?”

“My gods,” replied the girl, “are not like yours at all. They do not demand that one should give up everything. If you only give them a little honey and bread, and a green wreath, or flowers to hang up, and light a bonfire, they are quite satisfied. But the best of them all is the Verdant Goddess.” Half singing, half talking, she continued, “The Verdant Goddess walks through the meadows, through the green grass and the forests, through the waters and the mountains. It is she who sows for us the new flowers, plants, green herbs and leafy trees. She likes to wear a wreath of flowers, and clothe herself in fleecy clouds. You will see her in the sunshine in the Great and Little May, when she wanders through the fields. Girls with garlands in the moonlight, they raise to her an altar out of flowers and red berries in the great feast of the Green Goddess. Flowers, moonshine and big fires. All the people dance around the fire in that warm bright night of May. They sing around the fire. But those who are still maidens make a separate smaller circle and sing like this:

‘Verdant Goddess,
Our beloved Goddess,
Touch our little breasts.
Touch our eyes and cheeks.
Goddess, our beloved,

We are worthy still
Of your hand that sows
Flowers on the earth.
We have never yet
Shared our bed with man.
We are still as pure
As white snow; as dew
We have still the bloom
Painted like a rose.
Goddess, our beloved
Goddess, it is your day!'

"While they sing, the boys creep behind the bushes and suddenly rush out towards them. The girls flee into the forest. They try to escape, the boys in pursuit. Some of the boys seize fiery branches and run with them. All the forest is full of shrieking laughter, noise and fires. Such is the day of the Green Goddess! The girls who fail to escape belong to the boys who happen to catch them. But there are very few who really try to run away.
Such is the great feast of our Verdant Goddess at the full moon in the forest. The night of love, holy night——"

Brother Augustin listened, quite enthralled. He was so young and had never comprehended God's world until now. He listened and was dazzled. "The night of love—holy night," he repeated.

"Do you know what?" said the girl. "You shall help me to stretch my shirts on the grass. I'll give you your lunch for it. But stretch them a little higher up, not so close to the stream."

He hardly noticed when she gave him a couple of damp shirts, and without realizing what he was doing, he started to stretch them on the grass. His heart was beating, his hands were trembling, and the words "The night of love, holy night" still rang in his ears.

"Do you know, this little shirt, with the lace around the neck, this is for the feast. Only those who are still maidens may wear such a shirt."

"You are a maiden then?" the priest cried involuntarily.

"Of course, I am a maiden!"

"And you washed this shirt for the holy night of love?"

"Yes, for the first time. I wove the linen and sewed it myself. That's the custom. When a girl is fifteen, she is given a shirt like this to sew and to wash. But not before."

“So you are only fifteen?”

“Yes, this summer I am fifteen.”

“And you are a maiden yet?”

“But why do you wonder so much? Perhaps you are still a youth. However you look quite a man already.”

The priest felt hot, but the big blue eyes of Little Dew, full of sparkling light, looked at him with a bold, naïve, inquiring laughter.

“Well, we have done our work nicely. The sun is awfully warm. Let’s go and lie down in the shade.”

The priest stood up and straightened himself.

“Come, let’s lie under that maple tree.”

The priest followed. Something had bewitched him. He lay down on the grass. The girl started to play with his rosary, next his scapulary, then she took off first one, then the other, and he did not defend himself at all, not at all.

Then she played with his curly youthful beard and his soft dark hair.

“You are handsome,” she said, and her breath came quickly. “Handsome,” she repeated, and two slender, strong arms encircled Brother Augustin’s neck.

Not long after that, the Christians had to think of leaving Ludimier. Robbers had started to take their cattle from their pastures and to burn their barns. Like demons they appeared from the dark forest and robbed, burned and destroyed everything around the monastery. They robbed not only by night, but even in broad daylight.

One day the father abbot was standing on the monastery walls, watching the robbers who were trying to drive away the herdsmen. Suddenly he cried:

“Good gracious! Look there, brothers! Can you see that tall peasant in front, wearing the coat with the fur turned out, with a big stick in his hand? And beside him a young girl, also with a stick? By Saint Kunegunda and Saint Remigeus our protector! my eyes do not deceive me. It is Brother Augustin, whom we took for a martyr!”

And the sacristan murmured: “It moved in him . . . it moved . . . it moved . . .”

Soon after, the persecuted brethren left for Szczyrzyc.

K. T. 10. x. 23.

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# THE REASON FOR RHYME

THE attack upon formal poetic metre which our age has witnessed, and which we see to be falling, springs, I suspect, rather from a surfeit of “sure returns of still expected rhymes” than from a disgust with metre as such. I am aware that in the minds of many of the moderns, free verse is vaguely associated with freedom in general; but few of the moderns are philosophical enough to make even a philosophical mistake. They do not understand principles, but they can understand that free verse becomes a practical necessity once rhyme is discarded. Blank verse in English, owing to the character of our language, is necessarily confined either to the decasyllabic line or to imitations of classical forms. How little chance these have of success may be observed in Long-fellow’s hexameters and in “Hiawatha.” But even were they successful, it would still mean that the scope of poetry is immediately restricted once rhyme is abandoned. For noble instrument as blank verse is, it is insufficient for the lyric reaches; hence the attempt to get over the difficulty by abandoning metre. The baby is thrown out with the bath.

This irritation with rhyme is not new. Milton was its first mouthpiece—the Milton of the gloriously rhymed “Lycidas”; and Wordsworth, who had written a mealy-mouthed and slovenly sonnet in defence of the sonnet, went on to write another, and a much better, sonnet to prove that

> The grandeur of the forest tree
> Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
> But from its own divine vitality.

Wordsworth was, of course, too good a poet to deny metre its place in poetry, but he was for the moment irritated by rhyme, possibly owing to his notorious difficulty with it. Both Milton and Wordsworth, however, contented themselves with grumbling. They attempted no technical experiments; they had no longing to burst barriers. They accepted the limits imposed by the English tongue, and went on rhyming when rhymes were called for. Their irritation was not nearly so acute as our own.

But we shall get ourselves into endless trouble if we continue to base our æsthetics upon a mood of impatience. Blank verse alone can not satisfy us. Nothing is more nauseating than a mediocre talent affecting the massive magnificence of the bare line; and although modern blank verse has, in the hands of such men as Frost, Abercrombie and Robinson, shown fresh possibilities, it would soon be wearisome as a steady diet. Moreover, Wilfred Owen's use of assonance in his fine poem "Strange Meeting" (an assonance that is all but rhyme), would cease, if persisted in, to be refreshing. If we are not to return to rhyme, we must either discover a new blank-verse line or be vers-librists.

We can do neither of these things with any likelihood of success; the language will not suffer it. And even if it were metrically and melodically possible, the fact remains that centuries of Christian civilization have set our spirits hungering for wilder visions and deeper emotions than ever could disturb the serene and sad soul of a pagan. These visions and emotions have sought to find in rhyme one of their outlets. I do not propose, however, to argue the case against free verse: I merely record my conviction. My purpose is to say a few kind words about rhyme.

Rhyme is no more than a device designed to heighten poetic perception. Incidentally, it is an invaluable aid to the memory, but although critics now and then defend it on that score, that is not why poets use it. They use it as a net to capture the elusive Muse. It is unnecessary, and would besides be absurd, to contend that the ecstasy of poetic feeling could not be achieved without it. Merely to take one out of a hundred possible citations, lines such as:

> In such a night
> Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
> Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
> To come again to Carthage—

achieve without rhyme all that it would have been possible to achieve with it. But however many examples one might adduce on this side of the question, there are far more examples that could be cited upon the side of rhyme; examples of rhymes that cease to be an accident of the poetry and become its very essence. Shakespeare's twenty-ninth sonnet, for example,

would have been a good poem without the double rhyme that transforms it into a marvel:

> Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
> Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
> Like to the lark at break of day arising
> From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate.

The bird, and the imagination, mount from mere words ("like" and "lark"—half-rhymes) upward until the extra syllable of the rhyme carries it out of sight and carries us into the empyrean. The line would have lacked the final touch of rapturous lightness had it not responded to its conclusive rhyme; for this rhyme is the actual embodiment of a certain balance of ideas which, as always happens when rhyme is successfully employed, seem themselves to rhyme together.

Such felicity is not, of course, always attained. It is this felicity however, that is aimed at in rhyme, so that the ringing of two words in unison (a simple affair in itself) shall by its appropriateness illuminate, transfigure and be fused with the content of the poem, thereby adding, as the rhythm has already added, a new but more emphatic corroboration than unsupported rhythm can give to the thought in the poet's mind. The chiming of these bells triumphantly announces the birth of poetry, and is inseparable from the spirit of the holiday.

Every poet knows that the perfect rhyme exists, could he but find it. He knows, too, that felicity in rhyming bears slight relation to facility in rhyming. Swift, who won his wager by matching "Nebuchadonozer" with "the curse of God, on you sir!" and Browning with his fantastic, Byron with his humorous, and Swinburne with his rhetorical effects were led by their mere aptitude for jingling to use rhyme for its own sake, in order to show off, or to amuse themselves with the pretty bells. Wordsworth, who plodded heavily after his rhymes and could attempt no feats, was saved by sheer slowness from abusing loveliness by too dexterous an exploitation of it.

> The stars of midnight shall be dear
> To her; and she shall lean her ear
> In many a secret place
> Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
> And beauty born of murmuring sound
> Shall pass into her face.

Anyone who had tried to write poetry can see that even here Wordsworth had difficulty with his rhymes. Yet, as is almost always the case with Wordsworth, the sincerity of his artistic purpose enabled him so to use his hackneyed rhymes that their appropriateness bestows inevitability, though hardly a startling inevitability, upon his work.

Keats, however, who possessed gifts that Wordsworth lacked, was often able to do much more. Take his most famous stanza:

> Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
> No hungry generations tread thee down;
> The voice I heard this passing night was heard
> In ancient days by emperor and clown:
> Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
> Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
> She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
> The same that oft-times hath
> Charmed magic casements opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

That would have been fine poetry even without rhyme; but it is so much finer with rhyme that we can scarcely conceive of it without. It becomes what it is, moreover, because of one singularly fortunate rhyme: “hath” rhyming with “path” does the trick. It is at once the only possible and (especially because of the splitting of the whole verb) an unusual rhyme, one that is at the same instant surprising and what was expected. This is the secret of its charm. The absence of complete identity of vowel-sound is the key that opens the magic casement over those fairy lands; and the fact that “hath” can be uttered only in a whisper awakens the sense of mystery. This kind of thing could never have been brought about deliberately; it was a slice of the luck that comes to none save great artists; or is it that only great artists are able to take advantage of such luck?

Whatever else rhyme is, it is not an artificiality. I admit that it can be so mishandled, by being overstressed, as almost to be isolated at times from the rest of the poem; but that is no more than another phase of the delicate problem of what constitutes exact poise and proportion. We all know the man who is too well dressed and too elaborate in his politeness to be quite a gentleman. In the same way writers who, like Pope or Poe—to select extremes—obtrude their virtuosity, are really guilty of bad technique, and make their muse rather vulgar by over-dressing the poor thing. Yet all this

may be admitted, without admitting that clothes, or rhymes, are nothing but conventions. The matter may easily be tested. It is precisely the simple and happy people who employ rhyme, or some similar device. It is the highly sophisticated person who needs the sharp, bitter taste of free verse as a stimulant to a jaded appetite. A child of his own accord will make up rhymes all day long; my own children do it, even going to the length of inventing words where none exist for their purpose. I do not draw the conclusion that they will be poets; but I think I am correct in concluding that every poet who rhymes has first the simple pleasure of the child in any rhyme before he discovers the subtle pleasure of the apt rhyme. If we were all as natural as children, or as Wordsworth's forest tree, and had "divine vitality" in sufficient quantity, we would lisp in numbers because the numbers came; and, perhaps, when our simplicity was complete, would make every post-card a sonnet, and frame in triolets our request for a second cup of coffee. It is our unhappy modern prigs and pedants who can not endure the complexity of nature. Like godless Puritans they regard themselves as superior to the gold on the vestments and the carving on the altar, and insist on singing their dreary psalms within whitewashed walls—bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

If ever there was a spontaneous poem it is "Kubla Khan"; and yet these very lines, composed in dream or directly "received," are more crowded with varied metrical and melodic device than perhaps any others in our literature. Had Coleridge consciously written them, he might not have dared to let their flashing fountains play so audaciously in the sun. At any rate he knew that, broad awake, he could not hope to finish the poem. He would have toned it down and spoiled it.

> But oh! that deep, romantic chasm which slanted
> Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon-lover!

Even the most miserable vers-librist, however, would use nothing but metre and rhyme if he could do it with no more effort than Coleridge had to make. The trouble is that although rhyme is so easy that any child can manage it, excellence of rhyme, rhyme that heightens poetic emotion and is

a part of the content of the poem, is a thing so difficult as to be almost a miracle. Mere ingenuity is within the compass of any clever man; and there is a genuine, if not a high, kind of literary delight to be obtained through the rhyming of a Barham or a Gilbert. It is like the pleasure one takes in seeing a man balance a chair on a walking-stick, and a knife on the chair, and a billiard-ball on the knife, and a bowl of gold-fish on the billiard-ball, and the whole affair, spining round, on his nose; but it is a smaller pleasure than one takes in seeing a great actor do what seems more easy and yet is far more difficult. I do not wish an actor to play Hamlet with so much as a walking-stick on his nose, but I do want Hamlet to be spoken as blank verse; and I also want to see a poet adding to the difficulty of his art by writing in rhyme. I want to see this because rhyme is appropriate, even though it is now and then not absolutely essential, to lyric poetry. I want to see it because the difficulty of art is the artist's opportunity. The poet has not only more freedom but also more fun by recognizing his limits and by working within them. The same thing that holds him down is also his spur. The ship must be ballasted to be buoyant; the bird flies by its weight as well as by its wings.

T. M. 23. i. 24.

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## CHANGEABLE SILK

IN the American political scheme, so realistically adapted for keeping the bit in the mouth of the common man, the Supreme Court occupies a position of peculiar power in that it is the only political organism which in common repute possesses qualities of divination verging on the supernatural. It wears a halo of antiquity and brings to our matter-of-fact world some of the properties of the old mysteries which were so highly regarded as adjuncts of the ancient State. Its high priests are clad in symbolical robes of silk which no ordinary citizen would dare to adopt. Its decisions not only carry all the finality of a Sibylline prophecy, but the mystic sanctity of such prophecy is attached to them. When the robed prophets of the tribunal retire to consult the legalistic omens, presidents and legislatures fade into insignificance and the gods of social progress bow their heads upon the sacrificial altar. Their utterances are weighted with

dicta from the earliest beginnings of law and order, and with a marvellous consistency they measure the problems of our complicated society with yardsticks reverently preserved from ancient days when industry was represented by shepherds tending their flocks on the hill-side and husbandmen scratching the stubborn earth with a stick. In this fashion these oracles, serenely aloof and removed from the clamour of struggling men, conserve our society in the mould of continuity and stability.

The history of our court of finalities is of peculiar interest to the student of what certain European economists have called “the political means.” Particularly interesting, as illustrating the mystic divagations of this venerable institution, is its treatment of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Doubtless a higher consistency has inspired the tribunal in its successive interpretations of this Constitutional postscript. On the surface the court would seem to have reversed itself and re-reversed itself, to have doubled on its tracks, and strayed and wandered to and fro in an amazingly erratic fashion. As a result this simple Amendment, designed to cover a specific situation, has been magnified until it casts its shadow over the entire social horizon.

The Fourteenth Amendment was proposed after the close of the Civil War and was ratified by 1868. Its projection was the result of a crop of post-war statutes, hastily passed in the Southern States, which, as they were interpreted in the North, were designed to rob the liberated slaves of their rights as freedmen. “No State,” read the vital clause in the Amendment, “. . . shall deprive any citizen of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” The Amendment was strictly a partisan affair. The brilliant Judge Hough of the Federal District Court of New York has pointed out that in all the State legislatures only a single Democrat voted for it—one Barney Cregan of Tammany Hall.

In its early decisions, the Supreme Court took occasion to declare the special function of the Fourteenth Amendment. It would never apply, insisted the Court in 1877, except in cases involving the rights of freedmen. In another decision the Court announced that the “due process” clause afforded no protection against an unreasonable regulation by the legislature of public-utility rates. “For protection against abuses by the legislature,” ran the majority opinion written by Chief Justice Waite, “the people must resort

to the polls, not to the courts." It was an era of innocence. The first American case involving the validity of a legislative restriction on women's hours of labour came before a Massachusetts court in 1876, but the Fourteenth Amendment was never mentioned. The legislation was sustained. As late as 1885 we find the Supreme Court reiterating its language of 1868 and expressing its "increased surprise at the continued misconception of the purpose of the [due process] provision." Thus, as Professor Robert Eugene Cushman of the University of Minnesota has pointed out, the Court began its interpretation of the Amendment by complete acceptance of the doctrine of judicial noninterference with social and economic legislation.

The Court, however, carefully refrained from committing itself to any definition of the terms "due process" and "equal protection"; and thus, as Professor Cushman again points out, it left the way open for a change of mind. In later years, when a more involved application of the Amendment brought forward the relative status of such things as "police power" and "public interest" as opposed, in legislation, to such matters as "liberty of contract" or "property rights," these collateral phrases likewise were never subjected to definition; for, as Justice Holmes remarked in one of his opinions, the Court never defines anything if it can help it. Once or twice, in emergency, the Court took refuge in pious ambiguities that might mean anything or nothing. "Where legislative action is arbitrary and has no reasonable relation to a purpose which it is competent for government to effect, legislation transcends the limit of its power," ran one opinion, written by the cautious Justice Hughes. In another opinion, by Justice Day, the Court conceded that a State legislature might pass a law to protect the health, safety or welfare of the people, but only so far as it did not interfere arbitrarily with "the right to contract and carry on business." As Abe Potash might say, such definitions, like third mortgages, are nix.

## II

By the later 'eighties the personnel of the Court had completely changed from the naïve days of '68, for even Supreme Court justices are subject to the laws of mortality. In addition, there was a curious ferment in the times. The industrial revolution was beginning to strain the social order. The

simple democracy of earlier days had given place to a stratified society in which the majority in the “lower orders” felt themselves under great disadvantage. As yet there was no demand for a complete readjustment of the social system, but a growing sentiment was manifest for tempering social injustices by remedial laws. Under this impulsion, legislation attempting to deal with concrete social and economic problems was cropping up in the States, and the powerful interests affected by it were becoming active in opposition. The trend of the times was towards laws enabling members of the lower caste to rise above the status of mere beasts of burden, and this evolutionary change highly disturbed many worthy people. Historically, however, it would seem correct enough. As Justice Brandeis has stated in one of his distinguished dissenting opinions, up to 1813 English wage-earners were confronted with laws limiting what they could demand. Up to 1824 they could be punished as criminals if they combined, even without striking, to raise wages, shorten hours, or “affect the business in any way.” Up to 1871 it was a crime to go on strike. Not until 1875 was the right of workers to combine conceded by Parliament, and not until 1906 was the ban on peaceful picketing lifted. By the later decades of the last century the toilers were no longer content to secure negative gains from the political power, and in this country, as elsewhere, legislatures were responding more or less reluctantly to their importunities. Laws curbing privilege were actually beginning to replace laws curbing the under dog.

Professor Cushman notes that members of the bar and interests affected by these laws were bringing pressure on the courts for a broader interpretation of the Constitution. Unknown to fame is the name of that shrewd attorney who first persuaded the judicial high priests to dam the rising tide of social legislation with the Fourteenth Amendment. He deserves a niche in the Hall of Fame along with those of Choate and Mr. Elihu Root and other loyal servants of the God of Things as They Are. In 1889 appeared the first nullification of a State law regulating transportation-lines. The court, wrote Judge Hough, in discussing the case in the *Harvard Law Review* in 1919, “practically arraigned legislators at the bar, and passed judgment, not, mark you, on the justice or wisdom, but on the *reason* of what they had done.” He adds that of course the term “reason” was not defined. By 1897 the Supreme Court even went so far, however, as to

commit itself to a definitive outline of its revised view of the Amendment. This development occurred in a case in which the Court nullified a Louisiana statute forbidding contracts with foreign insurance companies which had not complied with the law of the State. “The liberty mentioned in the Amendment,” ran the opinion, “means not only the right of the citizen to be free from the mere physical restraint of his person . . . but to be free in the enjoyment of all his faculties; to be free to use them in all lawful ways; to live and work where he will; to earn his livelihood by any lawful calling; to pursue any livelihood or avocation and for that purpose to enter into all contracts which may be proper, necessary and essential.” With this the worthy tribunal formally declared its own sacred opinion of 1868 *spurlos versenkt*.

Fortified by this opinion and by subsequent decisions, the lesser courts set happily about the work of scrapping social legislation of even the mildest brand. “There is no reasonable ground . . . for fixing upon eight hours in one day as the limit within which a woman can work without injury to her physique,” declared the court in Illinois. In New York the court, in killing the statute forbidding night work for women in factories, declared that liberty as defined in the Amendment permitted a woman “to work at any time of the day that suits her.” In California a corporation that employed a man for sixty days and then paid him off by presenting him with an old horse, ran afoul of a State law. Under the statute, the court declared indignantly, “the workingman of intelligence is treated as an imbecile. He is deprived of the right to make a contract.” “In a government like ours,” declared the New York Court of Appeals in its stateliest manner, in the course of throwing out an employers’ liability law, “theories of public good or necessity are often so plausible or sound as to command popular approval, but the courts are not permitted to forget that law is the only chart by which the Ship of State is to be guided.”

## III

In the United States Supreme Court the transformation of the Fourteenth Amendment reached its climax with the famous Lochner case, decided in 1905. Under the Fourteenth Amendment an employer was contesting a New York statute limiting the working-hours of bakers to ten hours a day, sixty

hours a week. The Court had shortly before declared valid a law creating an eight-hour day for miners; but in the present instance it refused to apply the same principle to bakers on the ground that “innocuous trades can not be arbitrarily regulated by the legislature.” The majority opinion, written by Justice Peckham, is interesting as an illustration of the mental processes of the supreme arbiters of American life.

“An enactment . . . can not invade the rights of persons and property under the guise of police regulation, where it is not such in fact. . . . The general right to make a contract in relation to his business is guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. . . . The right to purchase and sell labour is part of the liberty protected by this Amendment.” To these considerations the Court appended a tender reminder of the right of the individual, “to labour for such time as he may choose,” and to this he added that the law involved “neither the safety, the morals nor the welfare of the public.”

> There is no contention that bakers as a class are not equal in intelligence and capacity to men in other trades or manual occupations, or that they are not able to assert their rights. It may be true that the trade of a baker is not as healthy as some other trades, and is also vastly more healthy than still others. . . . Very likely physicians would not recommend the exercise of that or any other trade or ill health. It is unfortunately true that labour, even in any department, may carry with it the seeds of unhealthiness. But are we all, on that account, at the mercy of legislative majorities?

If it was all right for a baker to work ten hours, asked the Court, why if he worked ten and a half hours would his health be endangered and his bread be rendered unhealthy? Would not limiting his working-hours cripple his ability to support his family? If a baker’s hours were to be limited, where would such restrictions stop? With obvious anxiety the Court suggested the possibility of a physician, having finished his legalized daily stint, being faced with the alternatives of sacrificing the life of a fellow-man or becoming a criminal. “We do not believe,” concluded Justice Peckham, “in the soundness of the views which upheld this law”; and he wound up with the intimation, drawn from his inner consciousness, that “there was some other motive dominating the legislature than the purpose to subserve the public health and welfare.”

On this sort of taradiddle no comment is necessary. Justice Peckham has since been called before a court of final decision beside which the Supreme Court seems relatively impermanent. Justices Harlan, White and Day dissented from his opinion on the ground that voiding that statute set a

mischievous precedent which might seriously cripple the power of the States to care for the health and well-being of the citizens. Justice Holmes, who also dissented, held that the validity of the statute was none of the Court's business. "A Constitution," he reminded his colleagues, "is not intended to embody a particular economic theory, whether of paternalism and the organic relation of the citizen to the State, or of *laissez faire*. It is made for people of fundamentally differing views, and the accident of our finding certain opinions natural and familiar, or novel and even shocking, ought not to conclude our judgment upon the question whether the statutes embodying them conflict with the Constitution of the United States." It may be added that through all the record of backing and filling by the majority of the Court where social or economic issues were involved, Justice Brandeis has consistently refused assent to decisions which tended to usurp the legislative power.

The slaughter of social legislation aroused an increasing degree of public rancour. Outcries arose against judicial dictatorship. Theodore Roosevelt, then in the White House and in full eruption, was lending a not unsympathetic ear to the protests, and later gave vent to a contagious slogan, "the recall of judicial decisions." Possibly the high priests of the temple, as they sat in their carven chairs hurling the thunderbolts of the law, were impelled to muse uneasily on the dismal tale of a certain Bourbon monarch, and on the story of that ancient king who defied a rising sea. Perhaps their assurance was disturbed by the barbed dissent of Messrs. Holmes, Harlan, White and Day; and perhaps, under a less hasty judgment, Justice Peckham's opinion looked a bit shabby. At any rate, two years after Justice Peckham's decision in the Lochner case, the Court deftly shifted its position once more and decided that an Oregon law decreeing a ten-hour day for women employed in laundries was altogether permissible. An attorney by the name of Louis D. Brandeis had been retained to argue for the law, and he offered such an array of statistics showing that similar legislation was common in every civilized country, that the Court was persuaded to give heed to his extra-legal evidence. "We take judicial cognizance of all matters of general knowledge," declared the Court urbanely; and again, "It may not be amiss, before examining the Constitutional question, to notice the course of legislation as well as expressions of opinion from other than judicial sources." By 1915, when a

general ten-hour law for manufacturing-establishments in Oregon came up for consideration under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Court had apparently completely forgotten the decision in the Lochner case; at least it never mentioned it.

It was inevitable that these vacillations of the highest tribunal should create some confusion in the lower courts. In their efforts to keep up with the intellectual gyrations of the sacred Nine on Capitol Hill, the State judges were forced into odd mental gymnastics. In 1907, in accordance with the Lochner decision, the Court of Appeals of New York unanimously declared void a State law forbidding night work for women and minors in factories. The Legislature promptly passed a new law of the same character, and in 1915 the same court placidly sanctioned the measure, with the explanation that during the intervening years there had risen a widespread belief that such work was injurious to health, and in the previous case their attention had not been attracted to facts bearing on the hygienic necessity for such a law! The Supreme Court of Illinois executed a similar somersault in the case of a law establishing a ten-hour day for women. In the maze of conflicting opinions the Fourteenth Amendment was not infrequently utilized to crush and to sustain laws of virtually the same character, in different States, on virtually the same date.

## IV

Meanwhile the Supreme Court kept a steady course, for over a decade, towards the emancipation of the legislative power of the States. In case after case it withheld the lethal application of the Fourteenth Amendment. It permitted the States to regulate insurance companies, to pass laws guaranteeing bank deposits, to establish rent-laws. It sustained a law forbidding the sale of preservatives containing boric acid. “It is plainly not enough that the subject be regarded as debatable,” declared the opinion in this case. “If it be debatable the legislature is entitled to its own judgment, and that judgment is not to be superseded by the verdict of a jury, upon the issue which the legislature has decided.” The court tolerated a Maine statute permitting cities to sell fuel at cost, and despite loud appeals to the Fourteenth Amendment by certain taxpayers, it permitted the Government of North Dakota to issue bonds to establish State warehouses and a State

bank. In fact, it appeared, as Professor Cushman remarked at the end of 1921, that after long and varied wanderings the Supreme Court had at last brought the famous Amendment safely to anchor in a sure harbour. It had reached the point of acknowledging that the legislatures, in matters of fact and of public necessity, were entitled to their own judgment.

Even while Professor Cushman was penning his prophecy, however, the Court had put to sea and was tacking back on its track again. The composition of the venerable tribunal had changed, and Mr. Harding, that indefatigable collector of old ivory, had made several of his characteristically happy appointments. The first case to mark the change involved an Arizona law forbidding the use of injunctions in labour-disputes, except to prevent the destruction of physical property. The owner of a restaurant in Bisbee had had a dispute about wages with his hands; they had struck, picketed his place, and tried to keep off his customers by distributing handbills setting forth their alleged wrongs; and the proprietor sought to nullify the statute in order to obtain an injunction forcing the recalcitrants to accept his terms or sit at home and pray. Justice Taft's majority opinion, nullifying the State law, was an interesting pæan on property-rights. He declared that the "due process" clause had come down from Magna Charta, and he enfolded the restaurant man in that hoary old parchment. Four justices dissented, Justice Brandeis reminding the Court that "the rights of property and the liberty of the individual must be remoulded, from time to time, to meet the changing needs of society."

The Court went even farther back in overthrowing a minimum-wage law for women and children in the District of Columbia, in April, 1923. The majority opinion, written by Justice Sutherland, dragged from its long obscurity the Lochner decision, and also the decision invalidating the Louisiana insurance law. It was true, conceded Justice Sutherland, that the court had once permitted an Oregon statute limiting the hours of employment for women, but this decision was based on the theory of inequality between the sexes, and this "ancient inequality" had now come "almost, if not quite, to the vanishing point." No public body, he contended, could possibly be competent to determine a just minimum wage, for "the amount necessary to maintain a woman in health and morals varies with temperament, habits and thrift." Moreover, such legislation was likely to ruin employers, while the evidence of its beneficiary effects were only

“mildly persuasive.” Therefore, concluded the Justice, the law was “a naked and arbitrary exercise of power that can not be allowed to stand.”

Clearly the Court had gone prancing back to dear old Justice Peckham. It is interesting to note that Chief Justice Taft, in a dissenting opinion, completely overturned his own opinion in the Arizona case of the previous year. “It is not the function of this Court,” he declared, “to hold congressional acts invalid because they are passed to carry out economic views which the Court believes to be unwise or unsound.” Thus, by a neat handspring, the Chief Justice had landed beside Justice Brandeis.

Here, for the present, ends a long record of errancy. After being dragged hither and yon for over half a century, the Fourteenth Amendment is for the time firmly established as a lever for the assumption of supra-legislative power by the judiciary. Its original purpose of protecting the coloured brethren from peculiar discriminations has been completely bleached out. In its adventurous course with the Amendment, our supreme tribunal has given a rare demonstration in prestidigitation. It has swallowed its own decisions and eventually regurgitated them in their pristine integrity. It has stood fast on abstract legal concepts and precedents, and later discarded them in favour of a reasonable consideration of essential realities; and, as the wind shifted, it has again shut its eyes to realities and stuck its head back in the comfortable sands of legal abstraction. It has been aggressively dictatorial one year and passively acquiescent the next. “*Mutabile semper,*” the motto should read; or, as Abe Potash might remark, “Minds like changeable silk they got it.”

H. K. 5. iii. 24.

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[1] Leinster name for the fairies.

# BOOK REVIEWS

# ONE ON A TOWER

THINK, if you will, of the different sorts of places that different authors write in: some in bungalows, some in offices, some in hall-bedrooms; and some few in libraries, as veridically reported through the illustrated literary periodicals. Then, too, their costumes: some in shirt-sleeves; some in sport-clothes; some in dressing gowns or in monks' robes, like Balzac; some in rags and some in tags and some in velvet gowns. . . .

Of all these men the most fortunate should be the man who writes in a real library, in a real country house conveniently distant from town; who intensifies his seclusion by turning his thoughts to distant lands and remote epochs, and by working in garments that remove him still farther from the Here and Now. One can not be too sure just how Mr. James Branch Cabell is garbed when bending over his desk some dozen miles from Virginia's Richmond; but one feels confident that such a withdrawal justifies a special costume, borrowed from an earlier age and worn with a special mien.

So situated, one is shut in from the stir of the general air and tends to ignore the beat of the public pulse. The next stage beyond ordinary seclusion is seclusion in the well-known Ivory Tower. However, let us hasten to cancel the "ivory." Mr. Cabell's Tower is not of ivory—no, not exactly. Rather is it frescoed, mosaicked, even adorned with equivocal sculptures from strange, far lands. Really it is not the retired abode of utter innocence. It is more nearly the abode of self-idealization.

I find Mr. Cabell's earlier books, and several of his later ones, sprinkled with personal allusions. Some of these have their obscurities, but all of them have their choicenesses. Some of these allusions are autobiographical; some of them topographical. Some of them are both, as might be expected from a man who pursues genealogy and heraldry and who is conscious of good old English origins and affiliations. Relatives—if ancestors—yield a certain satisfaction. Before such a scenic background as that supplied by family records, a man tends to take on a different aspect and to embellish a different view. He may incline to idealize a little both life and art. Yes, and himself.

It can hardly be said that Mr. Cabell, despite the number of his printed volumes, has ever shown any great tendency to open up his Tower and

wave a greeting to the world below. Newspaper-life in Richmond and New York did not bring prominence; neither did the insistent praises of the late editor of *Harper's Magazine*, sung through many years. Photographs and biographical notes have been pleasingly rare. Critics of consequence have assured our man that he could never hope to be popular. Perhaps only an inquiring censorship could have brought him into a real publicity.

Mr. Cabell's Tower has always been ambulant—America, England, France, and the Nowhere-No-time of vague myth and tradition; and he sits in it and writes as it rocks. But its general tendency is to trundle back to France. Here it commands a wide mediæval prospect—a world hung with tapestry and carpeted with legend, a world whose social and amatory ideals he surveys and upholds, just as Mr. Ralph Adams Cram surveys and upholds its artistic and industrial ideals. Both hark back to an age that was unified, a world certain of its beliefs and prepared to act upon them. "Faith," in the definition of the sharp schoolboy, "is believing what you know isn't true"; but better to act on a belief which may not be well-founded than to hesitate, as to-day does, from lack of any belief at all.

Well, Mr. Cabell believes firmly enough in mediæval France, and his mediævals believe firmly enough in themselves. Yet a rocking tower plays hob with latitude and longitude, especially moral latitude and longitude, and duty towards the present hour sometimes receives scant consideration. The tower gets off its trolley. Then the Law, conscious of the dislocation, steps in and makes its inquiry. "Mr. Cabell, what does 'Jurgen' mean?" Raised eyebrows. "Why, is anything wrong about it? I'm sure I hadn't the slightest notion of an impropriety"—and those who know Mr. Cabell know that, of all who were shocked and surprised, he was shocked and surprised the most.

Thus the self-absorbed, self-devoted artist, working out his theme—and letting the shocks fall where they may. One can even fancy Mr. Cabell, in the midst of that seclusion which is at once self-idealization and self-realization, as casting open his topmost casement and plaintively asking the Law to go away. But the Law has seemed disposed to throw back a long neck and reach up a long arm and to invite him down to a general consideration of the scope of his own deeds—since words are such.

One more novelist, in fact, to lose his social bearings in the absorbing stress of creation: Flaubert over again. The author of "Madame Bovary"

probably had a moral aim superior to that of the author of “Jurgen,” but no higher an artistic aim. “Jurgen” was Mr. Cabell in fullest efflorescence—an ordered landslide of wit, whimsy, daring, erudition, élan, mischievousness, and rich, high, unflagging invention. But it was all art for art, art for cleverness and ingenuity and whimsicality, art for an elaborate, towering, many-storied jest in which personal idiosyncrasy and personal irresponsibility were allowed to count for considerably more than the proprieties, or even—to be a little harsh with our gay, satiric and momentumful friend—the essential decencies.

But circumstances alter cases, and I would scale down any probable harm to a reasoned minimum. I see Mr. Cabell living a life of his own in a self-idealizing retirement, guarded from certain practical contacts with this rude world, surrounded by many shelves of late Latin, mediæval and Renaissance authors of the less edifying class, and gradually losing (by reason of a currency unjustly limited through many years) any sharp sense of definite and responsible relationship to the society of his day. His choice of a remote field—remote alike as regards time and place—has doubtless helped to accentuate his slant. I make no doubt there are mornings when he has a momentary difficulty in distinguishing himself from Nicolas de Caen, and noons when he can not always draw a clear line between himself and the clerk Horvendile, and evenings when he is nearly at one with Felix Kennaston, and dark midnights when he must struggle to keep himself separate from John Charteris . . .

“Figures of Earth”[1]—if this new work is to be unified along its simplest axis—offers us, in Manuel, another Kennaston: as in “The Cream of the Jest,” we face the creative artist (here a “maker of images”) in the process of adjusting himself as comfortably as he may to the exigent daily facts and demands of social and domestic life. Wherever and whenever that fertile, fantastic Poictesme may be, our author sees it with half an eye still fixed on the *vie privée* of Virginia: throughout he remains delicately conscious of himself and his own concerns, however much those of the race at large may receive due and exciting recognition. Yet Poictesme handily predominates, and it is manipulated anew with increased freedom, flexibility, and insouciance. Less than ever are we sure just where it is and just when it was: but through the fluttery agitations of this shimmering medium (upon

which Mr. Cabell is now as dependent as is Mr. Chesterton on paradox or Mr. Sinclair Lewis on reportage) we catch the outlines of his equivocal presentment.

Shall we not indeed see Mr. Cabell as a prankish priest intent, behind some veil, upon his mystery? Not all cults and their hierophants have invariably worked towards piety, nor under the sense of a keen social and moral responsibility. On the contrary. Yet we might ask our mystic to descend to the foot of his Tower or to the fore-court of his temple, putting his foot on firm, honest ground, looking about regardfully for the presence of friends and neighbours, and asking himself whether, after all, he hasn't some duty towards them, if only the negative duty of being a bit more discreet.

But here we are, demanding the most footless and futile of things—asking an artist to make himself over, to alter the essential hang of his character, and to change the general sweep of his literary draperies. A man's character is like a pair of trousers—tinker with them ever so little, and you alter the whole swing; for better, if you know how; for worse, if you don't. Shall we take the responsibility of altering the *pantalon* under discussion? On the whole, no. Decorum would doubtless gain; but the world would dull, the Flesh would pale, the Devil would droop, and the high horse of Invention would lower his proud crest beyond the certainty of a pick-up. Only those readers who are well-enough disciplined to follow closely a conscious artist in his work of self-realization will grasp the nature and the intricacies of certain thematic strands; and they, of course, are seasoned, acclimatized, immune. The merely prurient, coursing over such difficult ground as much of Mr. Cabell's is, get winded almost at the start. All the same, one may congratulate oneself—referring rather to "Jurgen" than to its successor—on not being in charge of a paddock of clever colts and fillies, with sharp eyes, nimble feet and ears a-prick. You might prefer that such should crop Mr. Harold MacGrath or nibble at Mr. Holworthy Hall or browse on Mr. Scott Fitzgerald; and a likely youngster, with justifiable hopes for a future, must deserve—and desire—rather better fodder than that. But Mr. Cabell, meanwhile, remains a cate ambrosial for the experienced and determined adult.

H. B. F. 4. v. 21.

## THE PHILOSOPHER OF SEA-POWER

THERE are many reasons why American citizens should welcome the life of Admiral Mahan[1] by Mr. Charles Carlisle Taylor, former British Vice-Consul at New York. Momentous questions, particularly with regard to naval armament, are soon to be determined, and many voices, English, German, and Irish, are calling upon the United States to adopt this or that expedient. In the babel of tongues, it is important to know whence cometh the secret wishes that choose the argument and shape the logic. The publication of Admiral Mahan's correspondence throws a great white light on corners that have long needed illumination, for no other man in the history of the American navy has wielded such a potent influence by his pen upon the form and philosophy of American defence at sea.

Alfred Thayer Mahan was born at West Point on the Hudson in 1840 and died in 1914. He was one-half Irish, one-quarter English, and one-quarter French-American. By the fortunes of matrimony he was brought up in the Protestant Episcopal Church instead of the Catholic fold, and by fate it was decreed, he thought, that the English strain should predominate over all the others in his nature. He was educated at Columbia College, in the days when it was a small Episcopalian institution, and at the United States Naval Academy. From the first, his interests were in the larger and more philosophical aspects of war rather than in the narrower technique of destruction. He did his turn at sea, but he was overjoyed when a call to teach at the Naval War College permitted him to devote himself to the study of the history of naval warfare in all its phases.

His voluminous works on the influence of the sea-power in history, and his numerous articles on that and related subjects were the fruits of many years of study and reflection. The thesis which he developed (1890–2) was, in brief, this: the sea-power has been one of the most potent factors in shaping the destiny of nations; it is the secret of England's supremacy; it was the instrument of her triumph over Napoleon; every country that would be great must give immense strength to this arm of defence. The practical conclusion which Mahan drew from this thesis was that the maintenance of the British navy constituted "one of the best hopes for the peace of the

world," and that its strength would be our strength. At the same time, he believed that the United States should build a navy of great power.

This thesis, put forward with undoubted cogency and buttressed by much learning, made a profound stir in the world. The Kaiser read it and was at once fired with zeal to increase the potency of his Empire on the sea. In England it was greeted with hearty praise from all advocates of continuous naval construction. Mahan was wined and dined in England as few Americans had ever been before. Oxford and Cambridge conferred degrees upon him. Queen Victoria invited him to her table. He met the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. In fact he was, as our biographer tells us, the lion of the London season. Quite rightly, therefore, Mr. Taylor regards Mahan as among the greatest assets of the British naval empire. He also considers it no less significant that Admiral Sims "was born under the British flag, and that his mother was British; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Snowden, the Admiral's grandfather and grandmother, both being English." If we had the Sims correspondence, as we now have the Thayer correspondence, edited by a British admirer, we should doubtless know a great deal more than we now do about the inner history of the present creed that accepts for America the supremacy of the British navy.

Laying all that on one side, let us consider for a moment the meaning of this thesis. The naval arm in an age of world-commerce is the supreme arm. Whoever wields it can dictate, even though it may be wisely and beneficently. America accepts British naval supremacy. America has wide-reaching commercial and territorial interests. If a clash arises with Great Britain, the power of ultimate decision rests with the possessor of the potent arm, the superior navy. Thus, in fact, sovereignty in the world-arena has passed to Great Britain. This is the cold, hard truth. Any final accommodation with England that leaves her supreme on the sea accepts her sovereignty in a sphere of vital concern to America. To that extent America is, in effect, a province of the British Empire. The only offset for the United States is the possible conquest of Canada.

If this is what we are to have; if this is what our fighting men on the sea are to be taught by American admirals, if this is to be our accepted policy, it is time that we should face it frankly and enter upon the compact with full understanding of its implications. Moreover, if we hope for the continued freedom and integrity of this nation, we must firmly and honestly believe

that Great Britain will not do to us what she has done to Spain, Holland, France, and Germany in their aspirations for world-trade and dominion. We must assume that under no circumstances would England attempt to draw around our country the circle of diplomacy and steel which she drew around the German Empire. We must read the history of the last thirty years of European diplomacy now streaming from the presses, and yet say that England would never treat her American rival as she has treated her formal rivals.

By all means let us lift the veil boldly and face the light without flinching. Admiral Mahan may be right. The course he lays down for us may be the true course. But let us walk in it with our eyes open, and frankly accept our provincial status as the greater blessing. Certainly it would be well to have the fever over so that we may quit tossing violently on this bed of uncertainty, hovering between war and peace, armament and disarmament. Nothing is so good for a strong man as decision even though the medicine he chooses proves to be bitter.

Mr. Taylor has helped us to clear our minds by presenting this excellent biography. The letters published are genuine historic documents and the style befits the subject. He makes Mahan an attractive figure to the public interested in him. The versatility of the Admiral is revealed in all its fullness. He could stop amid his profound historical researches to make a trenchant criticism of Mr. Churchill’s novel, “The Inside of the Cup,” or to refute Dr. Eliot’s Unitarian arguments. He was a faithful member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, regular in his attendance on divine worship, deeply interested in its missionary enterprises, a contributor to the spread of the gospel in heathen lands. He was a Roman of the old type, sincere, devout, reserved, a good husband, a strict but affectionate father, and conservative in politics. Woman suffrage, Irish Home Rule, and the decline of the British House of Lords in power were all alike painful for him to contemplate. Though a profound student always near the midnight lamp, he was no academician. As a delegate at the Hague peace conferences, he refused to approve the prohibition of gases in warfare, and kept our country from going on record against this now accepted instrument of destruction. Admiral Mahan, besides being a seer, was therefore a practical man of war. His Christianity was of the robust, red-blooded type. Thanks to the labours of an English gentleman, the distinguished sea captain stands before us in

full length, revealed as an heroic figure in the devoted band working for the Anglo-American *entente*—that band which includes Mr. J. M. Beck, Admiral Sims, and Bishop Manning.

C. A. B. 10. viii. 21.

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## THE FOUNDERING GRANDSONS

WAS there ever a society in which the man of thought, as such, stood in less esteem than in contemporary America? Was there ever a society in which the life of meditation was more wantonly unprovided for, or the claims of the creative life more brutally ignored? In sombre moments one doubts it, and one speculates uneasily on what can possibly be the destiny of so despiritualized a people as we have become. Industrialism, which is largely responsible, has of course operated with the same devastating force wherever it has with any completeness moulded the institutions of a country, but in America its roots had penetrated the soil before any vital and valid tradition of the spirit had asserted itself. That is the real reason why, for all our noisy "individualism," we have never produced a dissenting philosopher or a destructive critic of the first order. It is the reason, too, why the whole cultural side of our life has been, at its best, acen-trous and invertebrate; at its worst, shoddy, childish, and insincere. Every people, the cynics say, gets the kind of government it deserves, and we in America, on the plane of thought and letters, may pertinently wonder whether we have deserved nothing better than some of our syndicated philosophers and our Sunday-supplement professors. The truth is, we have had better than we deserved (there are higher types than these), and we have penalized the finer spirits, when they have appeared, by depriving them of exactly that sense of social relevance which their free development requires.

The plight of the philosopher and the artist among us is too apparent to be denied, and it is what especially occupies Mr. Harold Stearns in his recent volume on "America and the Young Intellectual."[1] This book is written with exceptional vigour, astuteness, and insight: one can only wish that Mr. Stearns had presented his point of view in a less fragmentary and unintegrated manner. But in his challenge to the conscience of America, Mr.

Stearns is on the side of the angels. “Something must be radically wrong with a culture and a civilization when its youth begins to desert it.” That, he points out, is precisely what is happening, and his inclination is to blame, not the youth, but the civilization. Not even Mr. Mencken could be more aware of how barren, how brutal, how bigoted and repressive that civilization is. “The institutional life of America is a combination for the black-jacking of our youth into the acceptance of the *status quo*, not of 1920, but of the late eighteenth century in government, of the early nineteenth century in morals and culture, and of the stone age in business.” Mr. Stearns asks, in one of his titles, “What can a young man do?”—and in words that are a sad commentary on Horace Greeley’s earlier adjuration, he answers, “Get out.”

And stay out? Well, probably not, for it is included in Mr. Stearns’s point of view that “our genuine national culture” does contain a principle of integrity, and one which, though it has grown harmless through long disuse, can be rejuvenated and refurbished and made to do duty once more as an object of allegiance. It is here that one begins to part company with him, as definitely as one does with Mr. Stuart P. Sherman, whose observations called forth the first chapter in this book. Mr. Sherman as most of us know, discovered once, in a fleeting pythonic mood, that the heart of the American people burned with an intense moral idealism, and this is what he has since held up reproachfully to young dissenters as the centripetal principle of American culture. To many less erudite and perhaps more realistic minds it occurred to glance about the American scene for traces of that high ethical ardour, and, to date, their search has been unrewarded. Besides, it was suspected, to begin with, that Mr. Sherman’s conception of morality was a cramped and parsimonious one, and that, in relation to it, his interest in the creative life was perfunctory.

Mr. Stearns makes short shrift of Mr. Sherman’s “moral idealism”:

> Surely he is not so naïve as to confuse the reformistic and uplift tendencies of our national life—the Pollyanna optimism; prohibition; blue-laws; exaggerated reverence for women; home and foreign missions; Protestant clericalism—with anything a civilized man can legitimately call moral idealism. If he looks these things squarely in the face, he must recognize these manifestations of American life as in no way related to moral idealism; they are the fine flower of timidity and fear and ignorance.

Nothing could well be more forthright or more final than this, and one is grateful to Mr. Stearns for it; yet his own analysis of our culture presents itself as a not wholly attractive alternative. “As well as a single phrase can describe it, our genuine national culture, I think, is one of almost belligerent individualism.” Now Mr. Stearns may have in mind phases or periods of American life which were characterized by an honest individualism, not just a trumpery one, but for our part we can not suspect what they were or are. Mr. Stearns thinks of his “New England forefathers who kept their blunderbuss well polished and hung in a conspicuous place on the wall, ready for highly individualistic use against the exactions of any too tyrannical Government”; but one wonders what sort of individualism this illustrates, and remembers how tolerant these New Englanders were of Thomas Paine, and, later, of Emerson, Thoreau, Garrison, and Whitman. Mr. Stearns alludes also to the energetic individualism of the frontier, but this, again, appears to us to have been a shallow individualism of adventure and enterprise, not a sound and spiritual one of thought and creation. As for contemporary America—is it possible even to think of a society more enamoured of conformity, more cruel towards dissent, more anti-individualistic?

No, with every wish in the world to agree with Mr. Stearns, and with even a willingness to be persuaded by Mr. Sherman, one can not easily allow that American life has ever given convincing evidence of being dominated either by moral idealism or by belligerent individualism. Whatever figures in our national life may be asserted to have embodied one or the other of these principles seem to us to have been exceptional and accidental, not representative. Instead of moral idealism we exhibit, socially, the cynicism and the soullessness of the most aged and weary societies; instead of belligerent individualism, we exhibit a passion for uniformity and standardization that can scarcely have been paralleled in history. What can a young man do, indeed? Well, the truth is, as Mr. Stearns himself realizes, that ninety-nine young men out of a hundred are as unperturbed by the situation as ever their elders could be; that they are, in fact, wholly unaware of its existence, and would be but mildly aroused if it were called to their attention. The hundredth young man, when he is not reduced very early to a disgruntled silence, can choose between shouting at

the waves with pebbles in his mouth, or, in Mr. Stearns's words, getting out. It is a disconcerting choice.

N. A. 18. i. 22.

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## THE ART OF TRANSLATION

THE difficulties of a translator are almost entirely due to the liveliness of the material with which he works. Life in greater or less degree clings to the words of his original, is gradually evoked by the rhythm and the sound of a phrase; and unless he transfers that life to his translation he is not only a traitor but a murderer. Of course there is such a thing as dead language, dead in the sense that it contains no overtones of human emotion; and a book written in such language, a textbook of mathematics, for example, may be translated accurately and completely into another language. Translation of dead language therefore verges on copying. The symbol of infinity does not kick up its heels and refuse to mean in one place what it means in any other place; it is as uniform and stable as well-ground paint. But take a plain little word like "heart," and translate "sick at heart" into *"mal au cœur";* what is wrong with the result? The trouble is that the words are alive, that they move about and intermarry with each other into an infinity of combinations, so that the meaning of the whole is in each case a novelty, not dependent upon the sum of the parts, and requiring a separate act of comprehension from the translator to match each expression of the original.

Here, then, is the first great reason of the rarity of good translations. The good float isolated on a huge gulf of the bad, because the successful performance of an act of comprehension will always be rare. If we analyse this act of comprehension more closely, we shall discover that it contains a surprising moral element, which is particularly worth notice on account of the modern horror of relating any moral quality to art. To comprehend, one must be possessed not only of the requisite knowledge and intellectual capacity, but also of humility. To comprehend is at least temporarily to submit. The vulgar translator, like the vulgar critic, fails because he is incapable of surrendering his ego, even for a moment, to the current of meaning which flows through his original. Houdar de la Motte, when he set

himself to do Homer, insisted on elevating the morality of Homer's gods to eighteenth-century standards, and transformed Agamemnon's threat to make Chryseis his concubine into a tender declaration after the best French pattern.

When such conceit as La Motte's is generalized in the form of a theory, it may easily damage the translations of better men than La Motte. The eighteenth century, peeping over the barrier raised by its theories of taste, could discern only so much of antiquity as was essentially akin to itself. It saw Horace, for example, very clearly; but it could not endure genius that obeyed other rules and was subject to other limitations than its own. The learned Greeks of Alexandria suffered from the same disease, and solemnly cast out of Homer's text every line that they thought he could not or should not have written. In our own day, the theory that Homer is somehow or other pompous and old-fashioned has slain its thousands, and has spread over the otherwise excellent version of Lang, Leaf and Myers a thick coating of "saidst" and "spake" and "bethink." This is not the place, however, for a history of translation. So far as English literature is concerned, such a history would demonstrate how the art of translation declined as the history of progress waxed great, until at last we had completely replaced the luxuriant prose of North and Holland with the vast aridity of Bohn. That was the natural result, for the theory of progress was little more than a form of collective conceit, and an obstacle to understanding. Pick up a volume of Bohn, and you will see how small a fraction of the original could survive.

Next to the difficulties of understanding come the difficulties of reproduction. The miracle is but half done; the wine must not be turned into water. Unluckily for us, the art of translation is by necessity deprived of exactly those men who would be its best practitioners. A man who can work miracles prefers to work his own miracles; an artist who could reproduce the passionate simplicity of Homer is pretty certain to spend his time on his own imaginings. Occasionally some genius will break all rules and previsions by being a professor, and will sacrifice himself upon the altar of his adored. Mr. Gilbert Murray with his Euripides is a modern instance; another is Mr. William Ellery Leonard, whose triumphant version of Lucretius is too little known. Such work as Messrs. Murray's and Leonard's is, however, a lucky accident. We have no right to count on anything more

than talent. Talent is a vague term, but I mean by it the ability to translate good verse into good prose. Conington had talent, not genius; and his prose Virgil is far superior to his rhetorical verse. Jowett had talent, and Lang, and Jebb; a few recent names might be added from the Loeb Classical Library. Nevertheless, it is pretty clear that we are not being adequately paid in the coin of talent for what we lose through the scarcity of genius. The current translations from Latin and Greek into English are competent enough on the score of scholarship; but they are fatally sleepy; they drag. They render the original, but only after a perceptible pause, during which our attention evaporates. Once more we need to take a lesson from France.

The French know how to turn competent scholarship into a work of art. Pick up any volume of the new series published under the auspices of the Association Guillaume Budé,[1] and put it to the severe test of reading aloud; you will find in the French version precisely what is lacking in ours, a flowing tautness of style and thought, a power not so much of holding the attention as of buoying it up and carrying it on. The obvious explanation of their success in reproducing the liveliness of the original is that they know French better than we know English, and there is something in it in spite of its being obvious. If a writer of English has any artistic conscience at all, he is liable to overdo; he bows and scrapes and becomes precious. The French, on the other hand, go straight ahead; they use a phrase without apologizing to it. Their technical mastery is facilitated by the study of *manuels pratiques de la version*, in which foreign idioms! are carefully classified and furnished with the proper solution in French. But technical mastery, though indispensable to the writer, is from the reader's point of view a negative quality. It does not enchant, it merely prevents an existing enchantment from being broken. The interest with which we follow Maurice Croiset's version of Plato, or Mazon's Æschylus, or the Juvenal of Labriolle and Villeneuve, is not really due to the fact that they write French well, but to another and still more difficult achievement.

No work of art can be reproduced without being seen and retained as a whole. A poem is an act, single and indivisible; its appearance of multiplicity is due to the fact that the idea, the schema which came to birth in the mind of the author can not be communicated directly to the mind of the reader, but is compelled to disperse itself into the words and sentences

which are to the original idea as turbines to a waterfall. We have already spoken of the act of comprehension which is required of the translator; now it is evident that the translator must not only grasp but hold. He must not only ascend along the words, which are many, till he reaches the source of those words, but he must somehow manage to stay at that pitch. If he is incapable of retaining his intuition of the original in its integrity, the resulting version may be correct, but will infallibly be dull. It may be of some value as a grammatical analysis or as a commentary, but it will not be literature. The interest with which we follow Croiset or Mazon is our response to their vivifying feat of attention; we actually participate in their attention. The process which goes on in us is not unlike the sympathy which at an athletic contest transforms an indifferent spectator into a tense, excited figure who is hurt by the player's defeat and exults in the player's victory. It is, in the case of literature, a subtler process; we can not witness the strain of attention and of memory which enables the work of art to live again in its new form, but our own feeling will testify accurately enough to its presence or absence.

The translator then must be humble that he may understand; he must have ardour and strength that he may communicate what he has understood. The ideal translator, that is, has the qualities and ambitions of a humanist; he has made himself at home in two ages, and prevents the treasures accumulated in the earlier age from being buried and forgotten in the later. Benjamin Rogers composed his brilliant version of the "Thesmophoriazusae" from memory, when he had no copy of Aristophanes at hand; Mr. Gilbert Murray, in the preface which he wrote for Rogers, speaks very wisely of such scholars as having steeped themselves in Greek literature till it became "a sort of instinct, a life-companion and a permanent joy." That is humanism. But when Mr. Murray says that such scholarship "is old-fashioned, and is very English," he commits a serious error. Messrs. Murray and Leonard are not old-fashioned; Croiset and Mazon are not very English. There is no essential conflict between the use of card-indexes and humanism. It is the function of the humanist to widen and deepen the thin stream of memory, until men who are separated by time or by language may drown in it their petty prejudices and hatreds and misunderstandings. The fashions of the moment and the chatter about scientific method do not make or unmake scholarship; rather it should be said that the scholar depends not

upon his indexes but upon his capacity to unite with his special knowledge something of the artist's power to see accurately and to communicate his vision to others. Scholarship which is devoid of that capacity is about as useful to mankind as science applied to engines of destruction. We could get along very well without it. But we can not get along without humanists, and a good translation is a sign that their race is not extinct.

R. K. H. 15. iii. 22.

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## THE CONFESSIONS OF JAMES JOYCE

MR. JAMES JOYCE'S "Ulysses"[1] belongs to that class of literature which has always aroused more interest than any other. Although "Ulysses" is new and original in its form, it is old in its class or type: it actually, if not obviously, belongs to the Confession class of literature, and although everything in it takes place in less than twenty-four hours, it really contains the life of a man. It is the Confessions of James Joyce, a most sincere and cunningly-wrought autobiographical book; it is as if he had said, "Here I am; here is what country and race have bred me, what religion and life and literature have done to me." Not only his previous book, "Portrait of the Artist," but all of Joyce's work, gives the impression of being literally derived from experience; and from internal evidence in "Ulysses," notably the conversation of Stephen Dedalus on Shakespeare in the National Library, one suspects that Joyce believes only in the autobiographical in art.

Such being the nature of the book, it is clear that the difficulty of comprehending it will not be allowed to stand in the way by anybody who can get possession of it. Joyce has so many strange things to say that people would struggle to understand him, no matter in what form or tongue he wrote. Yet the difficulties in the way are very real; "Ulysses" is one of the most racial books ever written, and one of the most Catholic books ever written; this in spite of the fact that one would not be surprised to hear that some official of the Irish Government or of the Church had ordered it to be publicly burned. It hardly seems possible that it can be really understood by anybody not brought up in the half-secret tradition of the heroism, tragedy, folly and anger of Irish nationalism, or unfamiliar with the philosophy,

history, and rubrics of the Roman Catholic Church; or by one who does not know Dublin and certain conspicuous Dubliners. The author himself takes no pains at all to make it easy of comprehension. Then, too, the book presupposes a knowledge of many literatures; a knowledge which for some reason, perhaps the cheapness of leisure, is not uncommon in Dublin, and, for whatever reason, perhaps the dearness of leisure, is rather uncommon in New York. In addition, it is almost an encyclopædia of odd bits and forms of knowledge; for the author has a mind of the most restless curiosity, and no sort of knowledge is alien to him.

"Ulysses" is a kind of epic of Dublin. Never was a city so involved in the workings of any writer's mind as Dublin is in Joyce's; he can think only in terms of it. In his views of newspaper-offices, public houses, the National Library, the streets, the cemetery, he has got the psychology of that battered, beautiful eighteenth-century city in its last years of servitude, when, as Padraic Pearse said, using Geoffrey Keating's words, Ireland was "the harlot of England." "Ulysses" is a record of a certain number of hours—fewer than twenty-four—in the lives of Stephen Dedalus, the hero of "Portrait of the Artist," and Leopold Bloom, and of a shorter space of time in the lives of certain other Dubliners, nearly all of whom are called by their real names. The day opens in a disused Government tower by the sea a few miles outside Dublin, occupied for the summer by a few young men as their bathing-quarters. In this first brilliant, blasphemous section, we have Stephen, Malachi Mulligan, and an Englishman called Haines. The key to the life and mind of Stephen is in these first pages.

> Stephen, an elbow raised against the jagged granite, leaned his palm against his brow . . . pain that was not yet the pain of love fretted his heart. Silently as in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown grave-clothes, giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful . . . a faint odour of wetted ashes. Across his threadbare cuff-edge he saw the sea, hailed as a great sweet mother by the well-fed voice beside him.

Wherever Stephen comes in, we have the vision of his dying mother; her death was the great episode of his life. True to his race, death is the one thing that rocks him to the foundations of his being; *la gloire* may be the great emotional interest of the French, love of the English, but death is that of the Celt. Stephen further reveals himself in the conversation with Haines the Englishman. "I am the servant of two masters . . . an Englishman and an

Italian . . . the imperial British State and the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church."

He is the servant of these two; and where has the peculiar spiritual humiliation that the English occupation of Ireland inflicted on sensitive and brilliant Irishmen ever been expressed as in this book? Where has the aesthetic and intellectual fascination of the Roman Catholic Church ever found subtler fascination? "The proud potent titles clanged over Stephen's memory the triumph of their brazen bells . . . *et unam sanctam catholicam et apastolicam ecclesiam*! The slow growth and change of rite and dogma like his own rare thoughts." Has the Catholic Church ever been described with such eloquence as in the paragraph that has that beginning?

The slender portrait of Haines, the Englishman friendly to Ireland, given in this section, is done with a subtlety beside which Shaw's Broadbent is a crude daub. Stephen regards him with a suspicion and contempt that in their sinuosities never once become either hatred or tolerance. The lines with which he is drawn are barely visible—a rambling conversation, some words of description, a few jagged phrases in Stephen's subconsciousness, some of which must be cryptic to non-Irish readers, like those in which his mind takes farewell of him. "Horn of a bull . . . hoof of a horse . . . smile of a Saxon"—a variant of that old Irish proverb muttered by nurses in the ears of their sleeping charges: "Of three things beware; the teeth of a dog, the horns of a bull, the word of an Englishman."

Stephen leaves the tower to go to his task of giving lessons in a Unionist school. As he leaves after a conversation with the head master on many things, including Jews, the head master runs after him to inform him that the reason Ireland has the reputation of being the only country which never persecuted Jews, is that she never let them in. Then with delicate irony, we are given, in a few sections later, almost the whole history of modern Ireland and of Dublin, as it passes through the subconsciousness of a Jew, Leopold Bloom, a typical and perfect Dubliner in spite of the sex-obsession with which Joyce endows him in common with all his other characters. Bloom and Stephen, like good Dubliners, parade over the whole city in the course of the day; Bloom's itinerary brings him from the north side, Stephen's from the south side. They almost meet at various places, are actually in the newspaper-office and in the library at the same time; finally, at night they do meet in a brothel in a low part of the city. There Stephen

has a fight with two English soldiers, and is rescued from the hands of the police by the tact of Bloom. He and Bloom then stroll around the north side of the city, and have coffee in a cabman's shelter which is supposed to be run by "Skin-the-Goat," that mysterious character in the history of Irish attacks upon English authority. Bloom then takes Stephen to his own home for a cup of cocoa, and the episodes of the book end at about three in the morning, some twenty hours from the time when the story begins.

There is little in the way of incident, but everything in the way of revelation of life and character. Joyce gives us the characters of Stephen and Bloom as they appear externally and in their own subconsciousness. One of the remarkable feats of the book is the manner in which the separate subconsciousnesses of Stephen and Bloom are revealed, with every aimless thought, every half-formed idea and every unformed phrase indicative of their separate character and personality, and of the influences that have gone into their making. This is most marked when they think of the same things. Stephen's mind, young, sad, visionary, is held in a fast grip by the books he has read; his emotions are all locked up by the one overwhelming emotion —his mother's death in sordid poverty. Men and things pass through his consciousness in vivid imaginative pictures; hjs whole temper is coloured by the humiliations he has undergone; his mind is so sensitive that everything is impressed upon it as with a branding-iron. Bloom's mind is bright, jerky, limited; unformed by literature, but strongly affected by music, and concerned mostly with concrete things. Bloom is drawn with the most careful solicitude for every shade of his character and with a humour that is all-embracing, and yet never approaching the extravagant. He is so real that no Dubliner can fail to recognize in him a father or an uncle—with his plans for improving the city, the extreme political views of his youth when he was more advanced than Michael Davitt, the milder ones of his middle-age (though his wife speaks resentfully of his taking up with Sinn Feiners), his attempts to be fair to the English, as becomes a sensible man, his conviction that he can invent something, or anyhow compose a song for a pantomime, his dash of artistry, his sketchy occupation, his industrious idleness, his anxiety over getting a free pass for something or other—a railway journey, a concert, or a voyage to England. There is also a subtly suggested foreignness about Bloom, particularly in the sections where he goes to drink in public houses with other middle-aged Dubliners; and there

is a striking passage where Bloom, remembering the other race to which he belongs, comes out with a quite impressive philosophy of life. He is the one character whom Joyce really loves and whom he endows with kindliness; and we remember his terrible concern for Mrs. Beaufoy who has spent three days in childbirth, and his buying biscuits to feed wild birds, and his care for the blind boy whom he meets in the street.

Almost every section of the book has a different form and manner. The account of events in Barney Kiernan's public house is given by one of the bar-haunters in the vivid and circumstantial parlance of a public-house idler, interlarded with mock-epical narration. There is a point where the rage against Bloom for not treating mounts up to a quarrel, and a peacemaker gets them all off on a jaunting car, followed by the citizen's barking mongrel, "and all the ragamuffins and sluts of the nation around the door, and Martin telling the jarvey to drive ahead, and the citizen bawling, and Alf and Joe at him to whisht."

The scene in the hospital where Bloom goes to see Mrs. Beaufoy is described in parodies of almost every style of narrative in English, from Latin and Anglo-Saxon to the method of the Irish provincial reporter; an accomplishment in itself possible only to a man with a minutely technical knowledge of the development of the language. From this half-way chapter to the end, "Ulysses" ceases to be of paramount literary interest; to what extent a writer can parody different styles in the historic development of English is not of literary interest, it is of scientific interest. The catechism relating to Bloom and Stephen, being merely informing, is not of literary interest. The revelation of the mind of Marion Bloom in the last section would doubtless interest the laboratory, but to normal people it would seem an exhibition of the mind of a female gorilla who has been corrupted by contact with humans. The Walpurgis night scene (not called by that name) is too long and too incomprehensible; one feels that Joyce has here driven his mind too far beyond the boundary-line that separates fantasy and grotesquerie from pure madness. For the enlightenment of readers who may never see the book, it may be said that this scene is written in a manner somewhat like the second part of Goethe's "Faust." It takes place in a brothel; real people jostle against folk resurrected from the grave, ideas and thoughts that came to Stephen and Bloom during the course of the day take material form and join in the talk, as ideas and concepts do in "Faust."

There is a salient abutting on the real and the fantastical, where they all meet, jumble in and out of each other's consciousness and subconsciousness, and disappear. For Stephen there appears inevitably the vision of his mother, as well as Shakespeare and old Gummy Granny (a satirical impersonation of Kathleen-ni-Houlihan). It is in parts wonderful, terribly impressive and revealing, but the prolonged scene gives too much the impression of a feat of intellectual and psychological gymnastics.

One of the chief occupations of critics of this book is making parallels between the sections and characters of "Ulysses," and the Odyssey. The chief reason for this performance is that the author exhibits a notebook with all these parallels and many other symbolical explanations. When it comes to symbolizing, authors have from all time talked the greatest nonsense; think of the nonsense that Goethe achieved when explaining the second part of "Faust"! Just as plausible correspondences could be made between "Faust" and "Ulysses" as between the Odyssey and "Ulysses."

What actually has James Joyce accomplished in this monumental work? He has achieved what comes pretty near to being a satire on all literature. He has written down a page of his country's history. He has given the minds of a couple of men with a kind of actuality not hitherto found in literature. He has given us an impression of his own life and mind such as no other writer has given before; not even Rousseau, whom he resembles.

The Confession-mind in literature is of two classes. We have the Saint Augustine-Tolstoy type and the Rousseau-Strindberg-Joyce type. The difference between Rousseau and Joyce is, of course, extraordinary, but the resemblances are also extraordinary—a psychoanalyst would say that they had the same complexes. Like Rousseau, Joyce derives everything from his own ego; he lives in a narrow world in which he himself is not only the poles, but the equator and the parallels of latitude and longitude; like Rousseau, he has a passion, not only for revealing himself, but for betraying himself; like him also, he deforms everything he touches. Joyce's method of deforming is chiefly with a sexual smear; where Rousseau romanticizes, Joyce de-romanticizes. In Joyce, as in Rousseau, we find at its highest a quality which in lesser men is the peculiar fault of the literature of their time; in Rousseau this was sentimentalism, in Joyce it is intellectualism. In the quality of pure intellect, whilst one remembers that a man can be a great writer with little intellect, Joyce is probably unsurpassed by any living

writer. Some attempt is being made by admirers to absolve Joyce from accusations of obscenity in this book. Why attempt to absolve him? It is obscene, bawdy, corrupt. But it is doubtful that obscenity in literature ever really corrupted anybody. The alarming thing about “Ulysses” is very different; it is that it shows the amazing inroads that science is making on literature. Mr. Joyce’s book is of as much interest as science as it is as literature; in some parts it is of purely scientific and non-artistic interest. It seems to me a real and not a fantastic fear that science will oust literature altogether as a part of human expression; and from that point of view “Ulysses” is a dangerous indication. From that point of view, also, I do not consider it as important to literature as “Portrait of the Artist.” After “Ulysses,” I can not see how anyone can go on calling books written in the subconscious method, novels. It is as plain as day that a new literary form has appeared, from which the accepted form of the novel has nothing to fear; the novel is as distinct from this form as in his day Samuel Richardson’s invention was from the drama.

M. M. C. 19. vii. 22.

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## “THE OUTLINE OF SCIENCE”

SPECIALIZATION in modern science has become so great that the scientist speaks a language unintelligible not only to the layman but even to his own colleagues whose researches lie in other fields. Every one owes a debt of gratitude to the editor of “The Outline of Science”[1] for attempting to bring into a small compass the results of modern research. Professor Thomson is known as a writer of numerous popular and semipopular works on biology, of which the most recent is the delightful volume on “The Haunts of Life.”[2] The “Outline” itself is very interestingly written; the style is lucid and straightforward though often somewhat jerky; in places the reader’s head is being continually twisted about to contemplate some new marvel. The illustrations are always vivid and clear, and the two volumes so far published, especially in the sections dealing with natural history, are very readable indeed.

But natural history is the easiest part of science to write about because it is the least technical; we have long had interesting and accurate books dealing not only with animals and plants, but also with astronomical and geological subjects. It is the less descriptive and more theoretical parts of the work that constitute the real test of its success; and these, it must be admitted, are not so well done. The evidence is not always properly marshalled or critically handled, the reasoning is sometimes confused and incorrect, verbal descriptions are made to do duty where diagrams are needed, parables take the place of plain speaking, and difficult subjects are quickly passed over with statements so condensed that the reader is given a false impression. The bibliographies also often show important omissions. Moreover, the commendable attempt to maintain an impartial attitude sometimes breaks down at critical points. Thus, while the book avoids being dogmatic about the non-inheritance of acquired modifications, a subject on which scientific dispute has practically ceased, the discussion of vitalism versus mechanism, a question on which scientific opinion leans decidedly toward the latter side, is characterized by a definitely vitalistic bias. Of course the editor might be forgiven or even commended for being frank about his own views; but to the reader Professor Thomson’s beliefs are of less importance than an adequate presentation of the mechanistic theory.

Moreover, “The Outline of Science” fails to convey an impression of unity. The great achievement of science is its correlation of apparently unrelated facts, its disclosing of connexions where none have been suspected. To the unsophisticated reader it might well appear from the “Outline” that each science is a law unto itself. Except in that portion of the first volume which relates to the history of the earth and its inhabitants, the articles are arranged with no pretence to any system. The “plain story simply told” becomes a series of stories, each of which is simple merely because its relations to the others have been overlooked.

In another way also the editor of these volumes has shown a lack of a truly philosophic grasp. For although there have been nationalistic controversies over the credit for various discoveries, and in times of stress scientists have, like their non-scientific fellows, been swayed by their political emotions, nevertheless science has always constituted an international fellowship. The fact that, as in the case of wireless telegraphy,

an idea may be theoretically worked out by an Englishman, experimentally demonstrated by a German, and practically applied by an Italian, is not only typical of the method of scientific progress but teaches a lesson of international co-operation which ought not to be neglected. The “Outline,” however, seems loath to take the world for its province; it is national in the sense of being British, and sometimes even provincial in the sense of being Scots. The casual reader might well receive the impression that only rarely have contributions to the advancement of knowledge been made outside the boundaries of Britain. Not that credit is given to those who do not deserve it; but it seems strange to read the section on physiology without seeing a mention of Claude Bernard or Johannes Müller, or to go through the discussion of energy without meeting the names of Mayer and Helmholtz. Moreover Continental scientists get very-scant representation in the picture gallery; in fact almost the only non-British portraits are those of prehistoric men.

The same defect appears in the sections on natural history. Here “our birds” are always British birds, “our mammals” British mammals, “our insects” British insects. These sections might have been utilized to give a more general idea of the life of the earth and to bring out some of the results of the study of geographical distribution. Instead, there seems to be rather too much emphasis on the United Kingdom even at the expense of the Dominions beyond the seas.

But after all, as Professor Thomson says in his preface, scientific information is less significant than the scientific habit of mind. As W. K. Clifford pointed out in his essay on the “Ethics of Belief,” and as Mr. Bertrand Russell maintained in a recent issue of the *Freeman*, it is of the utmost practical importance that people should harbour no views for which there is no evidence. If the “Outline” contributes towards such a rational attitude, all its weaknesses may be cheerfully forgiven it. However, a habit of mind, like any other habit, can be acquired only by practice; with all due regard for the services rendered by popular scientific treatises, we must admit that such works often produce a habit of mind quite the reverse of scientific. The oversimplification that necessarily characterizes non-technical exposition puts the reader under the impression that he has fundamental knowledge where he really has only superficial information. Hence this type of writing may defeat its own purpose. The general reader,

who is not capable of weighing evidence critically, comes to be easily swayed to any notion that is plausibly trapped out in the paraphernalia of learning; and as a result, he may be induced to hold very definite ideas on subjects concerning which there is no real proof. Professor Thomson himself can scarcely contribute to clear thinking when, for example, he says: “The human sense of race is so strong that it convinces us of reality even when scientific definition is impossible.”

Those who greet popular expositions and compilations so enthusiastically as providing a remedy for ignorance lose sight of the fact that reading can never furnish that familiarity with scientific materials and methods that results from work in the laboratory or training in the solution of scientific problems. It may be unfortunate, but it seems to be a fact that we can learn only by taking ideas at intervals, by turning them over in our minds until all their aspects are familiar, by establishing a system of relations between them and our own interests. An outline of history may be both scholarly and readable because the notions with which it deals are familiar to every one; but any general treatment of science worthy of the name must be so full of ideas unfamiliar to the layman as to be quite unassimilable if presented in the guise of ordinary reading-matter. Whatever it may be that the uneducated person can read as he runs, it is not science.

I do not wish to be understood as criticizing Professor Thomson’s ability as a scientific expositor. But I do wish to suggest that the subtitle, “A Plain Story Simply Told,” is a mistaken one. Science is often a very complicated story requiring complicated exposition, and no amount of expert teaching can take the place of actual thought on the part of the student. The question is not so much whether one can explain Kant’s philosophy to a peasant in his own language, as Tolstoy said that one could, but whether, after one has done so, the peasant can understand one’s explanation. So far from being always capable of enunciation in plain English or French or German, science has, in many cases, in order to make any progress at all, had to emancipate itself from the ordinary forms of speech and to construct a language of its own. This is particularly true of mathematics and mathematical physics. It is generally recognized that their advance has been due largely to the invention of such notations as the decimal system, logarithms, the calculus, and the vast array of higher mathematical symbols that are utterly meaningless to the layman.

It is in those fields where ideas have become most precise that new methods of recording thought have been found necessary; and if great and highly trained minds like Newton and Einstein have required special languages to formulate and solve particular types of problems, is it likely that lesser and untrained minds can express these problems and present their solutions in terms of everyday speech? It is no mere accident of history that the attempts to popularize mathematics have been very few indeed: “The Outline of Science,” at least so far as its contents have been announced, makes not even a pretence at including this subject. Neither is it an accident that those who have written on birds and flowers have left thermodynamics, a much more fascinating topic, rather severely alone.

In his preface, Professor Thomson quotes Leibnitz to the effect that as knowledge advances, it becomes possible to condense it into little books. The implication is that, as the books would be little, they would be easy to understand. But this conclusion does not necessarily follow. In fact the “Outline” itself, far from being compressed in its treatment, is quite discursive and its material is spread very thin. Professor Thomson might have quoted a more extreme opinion even than that of Leibnitz, for Laplace said that with sufficient knowledge he could condense all science into a differential equation. Yet we have never seen it suggested that this equation would be easy to grasp. The nearest that science has come to such a mathematical formula of the universe, is in the equations of the general theory of relativity; and not even the most sanguine of popularizers has pretended that these are intelligible to any but the expert mathematician.

We have, in modern times, come a great distance along the road of popular education. Yet we must not be deluded into making a fetish of the ordinary man and his everyday speech. It is no injustice to the average intellect to point out that it is incapable of thinking scientifically for very long at a time. Some would claim that this trait can not be altered at all, that the great majority of individuals would under no circumstances be capable of straight thinking. But although there is, of course, a large range of variation in inherited mental ability, yet the general increase in rational thought that has occurred in the course of history does not seem to warrant an attitude of extreme pessimism. It ought to be possible to abolish what we call education, which seems to be a scheme invented for the purpose of preventing the young from learning too quickly until it is too late for them

to learn at all, and to devise some system for teaching people what constitutes scientific method, and for giving them the elementary notions of mathematics, physics, and chemistry, of biology, and of astronomy and geology. Until we do something of this sort, popular science can scarcely be anything more than an outline—form without substance. We must realize that knowledge, like death, is no respecter of persons; and if there is no royal road to science, neither is there a special highway for the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

A. W. 27. ix. 22.

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## THE POTTER'S THUMB

WHILE he lived, William De Morgan gave us good measure; and it is only fitting that the biography[1] so long awaited should be a voluminous one, informed with something of the protean qualities of his literary work. It is discursive, and De Morgan was never in a hurry (using the phrase of a late distinguished literary agent) "to cut the cackle and come to the 'osses." It is digressive, and it was not the least of the veteran novelist's achievements that at a time when publishers were chastening the neophyte with shibboleths of "punch" and "pep," caught at second hand from trans-Atlantic connexions, he succeeded in imposing upon them that leisurely ambient in which the British novel moves most naturally. A life whose elements were so disproportionately mingled was bound to entail very special difficulties on its biographer, and it can not be thought that every one will be satisfied at the way Mrs. Stirling has met them. Those who hailed the series of novels beginning with "Joseph Vance," as the rising of a literary star of first magnitude, will feel that she has given us a little too much of De Morgan the potter, and correspondingly little of De Morgan the novelist. Those whom affection for the gentle and garrulous old annalist of mid-Victorian manners has never deluded into any misconception of his literary rank, will probably be the most indulgent. They would ill spare one paragraph of the long prologue whose testimony to a whole-hearted self-effacement in the cause of beauty, seems to reach us from the golden era of craftsmanship.

De Morgan’s family-background was rich and colourful. His blood was of the generous Huguenot strain which repaid Britain so amply for its protection, filling its crafts with skilled workers and its far-flung armies with professional soldiers who worked at their profession. The Empire took heavy toll of the novelist’s immediate forebears. A great-grandfather was blown up in the taking of Pondicherry, a grand-uncle disappeared in a cavalry-skirmish with Tippoo Sultan’s troops, two uncles were drowned, and the family-records lost in the wreck of home-coming East Indiamen; and the writer’s father was disqualified for continuing the family tradition of military service by a tropical disease which resulted in the loss of an eye.

It is probably from this father, Augustus De Morgan, the distinguished mathematician, that the son inherited the stubborn un-worldliness that marked his long battle for the arts against Philistinism. The sire refused the opportunities for advancement that the older universities would have afforded him, rather than subscribe to the religious tests then demanded, leaving his confession of faith in the divinity of Christ to be read from his will at a time when it could no longer be “the way up in the world.” Taking a chair in mathematics at the newly-founded non-sectarian University of London, Professor De Morgan settled down with his wife, who was the daughter of William Frend, an actuary and ex-clergyrman, in a modest house in Gower Street, where that erratic tribune of the people, Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Brougham, Coleridge, Browning and Wordsworth were familiar guests. It is pleasant to recall that in Charlotte Street near by, at about the same time, and round a still humbler professorial hearth, refugees whose social rank ranged from marquis to image-seller were gathered nightly to read Dante and scheme for a united Italy, entertained by their frugal hostess with thick slices of bread and butter, and coffee, while little Gabriel and Michael Rossetti listened, wide-eyed and wondering.

In the British middle class of to-day, riddled by tawdry ideals, shams and “swank,” such a circle as Mrs. Stirling draws for us would not only be undiscoverable but inconceivable. The father, absorbed in his texts and theses, is rather a shadowy figure. But the mother, Sophia De Morgan, stands out with a fine distinctness. Of advanced views, as befitted the daughter of a pastor whom intellectual integrity had exiled from Cambridge and Episcopacy, she was part founder of Bedford College for women, a fellow-worker with Elizabeth Fry in prison- and workhouse-reform, and a

pioneer for woman suffrage. Devoted to her six children, she keeps a nursery journal in which “peccadilloes and corrections” are chronicled day by day, together with phrenological charts of the young De Morgans. The family write verses and parodies after the manner of Edward Lear, give concerts of chamber music, exchange whimsical letters ornamented with pen-and-ink drawings, and dabble in psychic phenomena. Worldly advancement, far less social climbing, does not enter into the De Morgans’ scheme of life. It is significant that in a long letter written by the professor to his son on the selection of a career, financial reward is never once mentioned as a motive that should influence his choice. Imperialism, the stock-market and the “stunt” press have ravaged all this once and for all.

After a brief study at the academy schools, which seems at first blush a mistaken locale in which to test an artistic vocation, William De Morgan compromised by selecting the more formal field of stained glass. The relics of this period, we are told, still attest a flair for recovering lost processes through sheer force of honest workmanship. The long and financially disastrous essay in tile-making began with a re-discovery of iridescent Persian glaze in 1872; and from this time on for nearly thirty years, De Morgan’s history becomes an Odyssey from one suburban kiln to another, generally marked by unforeseen accidents and never far from the ragged edge of bankruptcy.

Probably no enterprise has ever been conducted with so complete a disregard for commercial foresight or decorum. The first kiln set fire to a house in Fitzroy Square. A second fire narrowly missed destroying an old house at Chelsea, to which the tile works were removed. At Wandsworth, an error in measurements entailed the rebuilding of the ovens and wiped out all profits on the first big order. With an absorption in production so complete that meals were often forgotten went an apparently absolute indifference to its eventual disposal; though there was a vague and typically Victorian dream of whole streets eventually to glow in myriad-hued tile-fronts. There was no sales-organization, the pottery being sold at haphazard by such local stores as would take it on consignment. There were weeks when the employees went wageless because checks had been distributed unsigned. Royal patrons called, exhibited a typical instance of royal meanness, and were sent snubbed away. Pieces of ceramic of which De Morgan had grown fond were withdrawn from sale. At other times, a sort of

orgy of destruction seized upon the eccentric master potter. An afternoon was spent on the eve of the removal to Wandsworth in putting a hammer through dishes and vases over whose fusing he had hung like a mother over a cradle, while limy assistants were bidden, “Help yourselves, boys.” A business conducted on similar lines to-day, and skilfully press-agented, might make its fortune by dint of sheer oddity. But the nineteenth century had not learned that everything, even eccentricity, can be capitalized, nor was De Morgan the man to teach it. Hand in hand with this commercial charivari, up to the very end, went improvements and new processes. The pottery produced before the final failure, Mrs. Stirling tells us, was the most beautiful of all. De Morgan had inherited an inventive brain, and had enough “notions” to make fortunes for three shrewd Yankees. An improvement in the visual field of binoculars, used by the Germans during the war, and the first free wheel for bicycles, were among the discoveries he never troubled himself to patent; and he was working on a design for an improved airplane at the time of his death.

Unalloyed domestic happiness came to the ageing craftsman through his marriage with Miss Evelyn Pickering, herself an artist of talent within the narrow Burne-Jones formulæ into which Pre-Raphaelitism had hardened. But it seemed that the utilitarian world to whose rules he would not subscribe, was always to be pressing on De Morgan’s heels. During an illness of his wife, an avalanche of bricks and mortar overwhelmed the Vale, a little oasis of park trees and old-world gardens in Chelsea, where he had set up his home; and when the couple finally migrated to Italy in search of health and peace, they stepped across their doomed threshold into a wilderness of demolition. In Florence, amid fresh difficulties and complications, manfully grappled with for a time by means of code-instructions to the Chelsea kiln, and samples of special thinness sent through the mail, the hapless adventure finally flickered out. The tiles and bowls that none would buy, found their way into museums, dealers’ hands and the collections of the wealthy. The craftsmen whom De Morgan had taught to make them, took to driving motor-cars and trolleys. Ichabod!

It was during this Italian interlude that it was my own good fortune to meet William De Morgan. The occasion was an “artists’ revel” in a hospitable studio on the Tornabuoni, where the outstanding feature was the wearing of more or less symbolic wreaths by the guests. Under De

Morgan's garland of ivy leaves, the domed and fragile brow, the iron-grey beard, the whimsical and rather wild eye, the long and sensitive nostrils, assumed a druidic and hierocratic air. He was gay and garrulous, entering with zest into the somewhat childish fun and artistic small beer. But in repose, the lines of his face were eloquent of fatigue and ill health. He had the indefinable air of those who have accepted defeat and are looking forward, not ungratefully, to the close of its aftermath.

As a matter of fact, that phase of his life which was to make his name a household word with English-speaking readers, had not yet begun. The history of "Joseph Vance" is familiar. Scribbled on notebooks and the backs of washing-lists as a relaxation for empty hours of illness, its merits were perceived by the faithful and appreciative wife. Publishers shied, not unnaturally, at the pile of manuscript a foot and a half high into which it was expanded. But De Morgan was deaf as ever to worldly counsels, and his stubbornness for once was justified when his novel, unabridged, took the reading world by storm. He enjoyed his success frankly and unreservedly. He wrote with extraordinary facility. Letters from all over the world poured in upon the lonely old writer, as once they had done on the prim author of "Clarissa Harlowe" in near-by Fulham; and, like Richardson, he was never aloof, always ready to discuss his Lossies and Gwens and Sallies with the far-away friends they had made for him. His sensibilities were not wrung by the jargon of "royalties" and "large printings." At times, he spoke of using his literary profits to start the all-devouring kilns once more, but it never so happened, and perhaps in the end he would not have wished it. No publisher ever prevailed upon him to "tighten" his style, but he was grateful for criticism, and especially for any *ex post facto* justifications of his bizarre plots. One departure from his popular medium he made, an historical novel of the seventeenth century, hailed by a benighted *Fortnightly* reviewer as serious work. But the reading-public had grown accustomed to its De Morganisms; it would have its De Morganisms; and with a chuckle, the lovable old author took up his fountain pen and gave again of his inexhaustible store to that generous, whimsical and many-headed monster. He became something of a national figure. His views were sought on woman suffrage, on preparedness for war; he was invited to take the chair at Dickens celebrations; he engaged in a controversy on rubrics with a polemical Redemptorist. His accessibility, in the end, was the cause

of his death. An officer on leave, determined to see in the flesh the writer whose books had eased hours of drudgery at the front, called, was hospitably entertained, and left behind him the seeds of deadly trench-fever. Seventeen days later, and after a week of delirium during which this descendant of many brave soldiers fancied himself a soldier in the fighting line, William De Morgan lay dead.

In assigning a place in literature to De Morgan's work, or in intimating how far in real significance he falls short of even such fleeting and frustrate Victorian figures as Dowson or James Douglas, it is impossible altogether to dissociate the belated essay in letters from the long life that preceded it. Harsh things a-plenty have been said about the insufficiency of the younger writers, but it is not altogether a misfortune that until the hard lesson of selection has been learned, the substance that is to be given literary form should be meagre. De Morgan's own content, the accumulation of sixty years of unremitting observation and experience, was prodigious. It burst and overran the mould into which it was poured; and the result is something strangely formless and chaotic, with only here and there a provokingly perfect fragment of contour projecting from the mass. His digressions are inveterate. One may read the long novels from cover to cover with sustained interest (they are really no harder to read than shorter and duller romances) and yet have the sense, as the last page is turned, not so much that a human experience has been achieved as that a vast clamour has suddenly ceased. He might be termed the master of the reverberant style, in which the echoes blur the measure. His humour is authentic, but marred by that relish for witless persiflage which all the Pre-Raphaelites shared, and which led them to correspond with one another in misspelled cockney English. It is plain that he was never subject to any kind of discipline, but triumphed, as he had failed, entirely on his own terms. He had little sense of proportion. He can not note the buzzing of a fly on a pane without surmising that "like the Bourbons," it had "learned nothing and forgotten nothing." He devotes pages to the locutory efforts of a stammering child.

De Morgan undoubtedly possessed much of the equipment of a great artist in words. To be convinced of this, it is necessary only to study the work of his imitators, who have succeeded in aping his mannerisms without capturing the secret of his charm. Had the call to write polarized itself round some experience still poignant, or some disillusion still hotly

resented, it is more than possible that great literature would have been the result. But he was sixty-five years old before he took pen in hand. He had learned all too well the lesson that life is a workaday affair, and that anticlimax is its norm. His sympathies were grown over-broad. He could not bear to allot to any of his creations a minor or a silent rôle, so his action is held up at every moment by actors who must speak their little piece and take their little “hand.” A certain impatience is of the method of those who paint on the grand scale; illumination and arabesque are the resource of the serene and resigned. We can be thankful that in his case the decorations are so gracious and the hues so vivid and real. For many years to come, tired folk will be glad to hold his hand and take their ease between the clipped hedges of his innocent labyrinths. With him at least, they need never be afraid. The company with which they will find themselves face to face at every turn and twist, is of the very salt of the earth. De Morgan was unworldly by deliberate choice, but never naïve. He knew the society in which his life was spent, through and through; and his aversions to all that is mean and insincere are instant and instinctive. He wrote of his youth, of the great Victorian period which, for all its misplaced complacency and loose thinking, had a hopefulness and elasticity denied to our ruthless age. Possibly on a final estimate his most competent achievement will prove to have been just this—to have shown us how much that was sunny and essentially sane the resistless wheel has ground into dust, in order that we might be brought face to face with the stark alternative of solving our problems or perishing with them.

H. L. S. 17. i. 23.

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## ON THE STONES OF THE ROAD

A people is like man. When he has disappeared, nothing is left of him unless he has taken the precaution to leave his imprint on the stones of the road.

IT is possible to write the history of mankind in many ways. One can assemble together the confused and contradictory data concerning man’s endlessly repeated attempts to create stable forms of external government, and show, more or less partially, how all these have failed. This is the

method practised long ago by Gibbon in his history of Rome, and recently by a writer who possessed neither Gibbon's philosophic irony, nor his epic breadth of vision, nor his aristocratic instinct for the significant—Mr. H. G. Wells. Or one can write history from the standpoint of pure social or economic theory. I have myself read works of this nature. They unfortunately bear about as much relation to humanity which loves, suffers, and is disillusioned, as a theorem in geometry bears to a banquet. Or one can attempt to write history from the standpoint of some universal law, as Henry Adams did; and in this respect the historian becomes as much the plotter of futurity as the recorder of the past.

Elie Faure's[1] method of writing history is akin to none of these. He is less concerned, happily, with the empirical theories by which science attempts to define reality, than with the patient attempt to understand that which has already come about. Mankind has lived upon the earth now for many thousands of years. It has passed through centuries of enthusiastic structural faith and centuries of disillusion and decay. What remains behind are utensils of daily life, carved and polished stones, pictures drawn upon walls, temples, tombs, and here and there some fragment of the universal aspiration frozen into the form of organized language or organized tone. These are the only records of what man has sought, what he has needed, what he has dreamed concerning his destiny. They are his creations, his attempts to arrest the universal flux of things, and to stamp upon them the image which his aspiration holds at some particular moment. There is, of course, no finality, no logical law which can ever enable us to say which of the many works of art that man, in his desire to perpetuate his most significant moments of vitality, has created, are the most important. But as Faure says in his introduction, that is of no immediate significance. What is significant is not to know that Michelangelo might have despised Egyptian sculpture, or that Phidias would have burnt Rembrandt if he had known of him. It is significant for us to know that each one of us is in turn Egypt, Michelangelo, Phidias and Rembrandt—that all these sides of the unknown reality which art has attempted to body forth, are contained in us to-day, for the reason that they have been expressed by humanity.

But Faure's history is far more than a mere compilation of facts and dates concerning particular art-periods and particular artists. He has written,

as he says, a sort of epic poem of artistic achievements, or, if you prefer to call it so, an autobiography of man's attempts to transmute and re-create in permanent form the world that he sees within and without himself. It is impossible to read many pages of this book without realizing that something in the author's own character and life-experience has given him a profound sympathy with the obscure and overwhelming aspiration towards life which every human being carries about within him. The solution of this sympathy is to be found in the fact that Faure is a physician, a social agitator, and a self-cultivated man. Moreover, he is himself the descendant of two contrasting racial stocks: one Protestant, positive, scientific (he springs from the same Huguenot stock that produced Elisée Reclus, the famous French geographer and anarchist), and the other Catholic, tender and mystical. Thus he is always attracted outwardly by the beauty of objective fact; inwardly by the necessity of giving that fact some emotional, mystical interpretation. In another of his books, "Le Danse sur le Feu et l'Eau," which I hope some day to see translated into English, he describes the artist as one who is continually striving to maintain a balance between knowledge and desire. That balance is in Faure himself. He has written the history of art as an artist.

In the two volumes now published of this English translation, Faure traces the history of art from its beginnings to the close of the Middle Ages. In the first volume, he takes us first to the epoch before history in order to show us how the art of that period, from the "Venus of Willendorf" to the bison-frescoes of Altamira, sprang from the daily needs of the men of that time, and how it disappeared, to be replaced by the sombre tomb- and temple-architecture of the menhir and dolmen when the first groping religious faiths had discovered the continuity of the soul. Then he takes us to Egypt, sitting immobile, staring from out its living tomb into futurity for twenty centuries; probably, as he points out, the most perfect civilization in itself which man has produced, from which all the rest have been but deviations, and the "whole of it contained in the sigh which the colossus of Memnon exhales before sunrise." After a slight excursion to the ancient East, we get upon classic soil; we come to Ancient Greece and Rome.

These chapters contain the kernel of Faure's contribution to the metaphysics of art-creation. Consider this passage, for example, on Phidias:

Philosophic sculpture is born of liberty and dies because of it. The slave in Assyria could describe vividly that which he was permitted to see; in Egypt, he could give a definition of form as firm as the discipline which bowed him down, as full of nuances and as moving as the faith that sustained him. The free man alone gives life to the law, lends to science the life of his emotion, and sees that in his own mind we reach the crest of that continuing wave which attaches us to things in their entirety—until the day when science kills his emotion.

The artist of to-day is afraid of words, when he does not fall a victim to them. He is right to refrain from listening to the professional philosopher and especially to refrain from following him. He is wrong to be afraid of passing for a philosopher. Also if we have no right to forget that Phidias followed the discourses of Anaxagoras, we recognize that he might without loss, have been ignorant of metaphysics. He looked upon life with simplicity, but what he could see of it developed in him so lucid a comprehension of the relationships which, for the artist, make up its unity and continuity, that minds skilful in generalizing could extract from his work the elements out of which the modern world has come. Phidias formed Socrates (it must be recalled that Socrates worked as a sculptor) and also Plato—unknown to themselves, doubtless—when he materialized for them in the clearest, the most veracious, and the most human of languages, the mysterious affinities which give life to ideas.

It is obvious that we have here a theory which accounts for the regular alternation of creative and non-creative epochs in art-history. The moment, according to Faure, when the individual becomes sufficiently free of the social structure to pursue art for its own sake, that moment he makes art subservient to his own philosophic speculations on life. These speculations, in return, affect art to the point of killing it by making it too cerebral, too formulated, too academic. Thus it happened with Greece, and with that other high period, the Renaissance. Egypt, too, might have known such a period of liberated creation resulting in decline, had the movement vaguely sketched out by Akhnaton pursued its course without reaction. In Greece, after the moment of time which stood between the temple-front of Olympia and Phidias, there was to be everywhere a decline.

The evolution of the great periods is approximately the same everywhere; but in Greece from the seventh to the third century, it appears with an astonishing relief. Man, when he realizes himself, proceeds like nature, from anarchy to unity, from unity to anarchy. At first the scattered elements have to seek one another in the darkness of the mind. Then the whole mass of the chaotic creature is weighed down by the soil, which clogs its joints and clings to its heavy steps. Then the forms disengage themselves and find their proper places and agreement: their logical relationships appear, and each organ adapts itself more and more closely to its function. In the end, the rhythm is broken, form seems to fly from form, the mind seems to wander at random, the contracts are lost, the power disintegrates. Thus there are in Greek art four definite epochs: the Primitives, Ægina, the Parthenon, the Mausoleum. First, the stammering analysis, followed in the archaic men by a brief and rough synthesis. Then, when the mind is mature, a new and short analysis, luminous and compelling, which ends, with a single bound, in the conscious synthesis of a society in equilibrium. Finally, a last research which is not to reach its goal, which is to dissipate itself more and more until it has reduced

its fragments *ad infinitum*, has broken all the old bounds, and has, little by little, lost itself through lack of comprehension, fatigue, and the urgent need of a great, new power of feeling.

We may well question whether this analysis of Greek decline does not apply equally well to art at the present day; but let that pass. What is interesting to observe is that with the advent of Rome on the scene, the rhythm again changes. Rome was the first country so overweighted with an alien tradition that she never fully expressed herself, except in politics and in law. What she did give was a hard concreteness to the dawning Christian faith. It was Rome which held Christianity from disruption and which gave to it a form, logical and firm. Here the first volume of Faure's survey ends, and we approach the Middle Ages.

If, in the first volume of this survey, we feel here and there the effort to subject the undying rhythm of artistic development to a schematization too narrowly logical, the second gives us the full measure of Faure's genius for synthesis and his profound comprehension of the struggle out of which all art is born. In this volume he deals with MediæVal Art, and his definition of MediæVal Art is so vast that it takes in India, China, Japan, Mexico and Peru, Africa, Polynesia, Byzantium, Mohammedan art, MediæVal France and Italy. What he finds held in common by all of these contrasted aspirations is this: he finds in each case (with the exception of Africa and Polynesia which, through lack of organization, stand upon a lower level) that art was produced by anonymous workmen expressing their desire for a clear representation of concrete human needs as opposed to the lifeless dogmatism by which their lives were controlled. Or, to put the matter in another way, while the Middle Ages everywhere were oppressive in external theocratic government, in their creative inner intensity, they voiced a long ecstatic cry for human liberation. "The Middle Ages re-created consciousness despite the gods they adored."

It is almost impossible to summarize the wealth of illustration by which this brilliant thesis is sustained. In India, for example, a pessimistic pantheism tending towards atheism was upheld by the Brahman caste. Nevertheless, beneath this yoke of negation, the stoneworkers sculptured the caves of Ellora, covered the rocks of Mahavellipore with figures, "disembowelled mountains to make them fruitful," carried their style and craft into Cambodia and Java. In China, again, there was the sharp division

into castes, and a morality of frigid positivism—Confucianism—imposed from above upon the masses. Yet the people produced the exquisitely formed masterpieces of Tang and Sung. In Yucatan and Mexico there again existed feudal theocracy with a fixed dogma based upon torture, blood-thirst, human sacrifice. Yet that did not prevent the Maya workmen from putting up at Copan monuments combining Egyptian grandeur with Hindu exuberance of detail, or the later Aztecs from creating forms of monstrous barbaric terror. In France again, there was the dogma of a religion of pessimism and negation taught by a haughty priesthood who were supported in their position by oppressive feudal nobles. But again, there was reaction from below: the communes, Amiens, Sens, Rheims, Paris, asserted their elementary human freedom and put up in the course of two centuries the most wonderful structures ever yet built to enshrine the very gods in whose name they had been oppressed.

The chapter on Christianity and the commune is the summit of Faure's whole work. However familiar he may be with other epochs and countries, it is France he knows best; and he realizes profoundly that France has never surpassed her art-achievements of the thirteenth century. How did these achievements come about? Up to the late twelfth century the pervading architectural forms of France were the Romanesque Church and the feudal castle. The one is narrow, gloomy, built by clerics for clerics, the other oppressive, brutal: theological force supported by armed force. Then, when the crusades had to a slight extent shaken the power of the nobility, certain cities fortified themselves against clergy and nobles and declared themselves free. It was in these free communes that Gothic architecture was born, and the cathedrals were put up not to enshrine a dogma, but to be the meeting-place of the crowd, and to glorify its spirit. The French cathedral is not only, as Faure says, the epitome of the French spirit—the spirit of Montaigne as well as that of Hugo, of Rabelais as well as of Pascal—but it is also the greatest collective and communal poem ever created by man. What was attempted by unknown workmen in India, China, Yucatan, here assumes, under more favourable conditions, its final expression. It is a hymn in stone, built by humble and forgotten crowds to the god they had within their own hearts: the god who is in turn Jesus, Dionysus, Prometheus; the god who lives through excess of outward suffering and dies through excess of inner joy.

So far I have been attempting to follow the course of Faure's thought; but here I prefer to pause and ask the value of this thought for to-day. This "History of Art" is a great man's great contribution to the necessary understanding of ourselves which we must undertake if we are in any way to equal—I do not say improve on—the past. What is it that it tells us? What, essentially, is its message in a sentence? It tells us that the spirit in which a work is done, in whatever period of art-creation, is more important than any temporary form which it takes. The Aztec sculptor carving a writhing mass of serpents, skulls, dismembered hands, is one in spirit with the workmen at Chartres carving the Virgin. Each is striving to embody in permanent form the god that is common to humanity as he knows it. Each is realizing that art is the most profoundly social, and, because of its being social, also religious function of mankind. Each is performing his duty, as a unit in society, of recording the aspirations of the society about him in permanent form; and each is essentially anonymous.

This lesson, then, is obviously meant for us. We live in an epoch of exasperated individualism on the one hand, and of crude, confused, and purely industrial striving towards State-socialism on the other. It is this condition of chaos which we call civilization. But if a true civilization is to emerge, it must rest on the idea that every individual, not a few individuals only, is potentially an artist; and it must also rest not on vast agglomerations of capital (as do all our modern States) controlling trade and industry, but on industry and trade being free States in and for themselves. Or, to put it in another way, whatever gods we may worship, they must be gods common to all of us: and they must be worshipped with the liberated worship of the common spirit of united mankind, not with the forced worship of Mammon or of Mammon's laws. In his study of the spirit of the mediæval artist, Elie Faure has shown us the way to construct a civilization that only weariness and flagging energy can dissipate. It is for us in America to learn the lesson which he would teach us before we destroy our last and best opportunity of assuming the spiritual leadership of the world.

J. G. F. 25. iv. 23.

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## PHARAOH AKHNATON

SOMETIMES in history there is a brief and sudden flash of light revealing glories of thought and possibilities of human happiness which fill the doubter with awe. It is as if behind the stage of the mortal tragedy another curtain were quickly lifted and quickly let fall again, showing for an instant the drama as it was conceived in the mind of the master. During this breathless interval, the warriors on the stage curb their slaughter, the priests their deceptions, and all the miserable human scene is for a moment transfigured with the soft and steady glowing of eternal lamps.

Such an interval was the short reign of Akhnaton, Pharaoh of Egypt,[1] whose biography by Mr. Weigall has just appeared. (He is called also Ikhnaton, Khu en Aten, and Amenophis IV, a name he rejected.) He saw that the world about him was faulty, and he rebuilt it; he re-created existence in terms of love for all things; in the gaily-coloured bricks of a new city and the kindly liberalism of a new fabric of State he realized the beauty of his philosopher's dream, and like a dream it vanished away again as soon as he was dead. I suppose in all history one might search in vain for a lonelier, a more courageous figure than this sickly boy, who, having once surmised the lovely possibilities of earthly life and the goodness of their maker, stood at bay before the onslaught of the ancient world and pushed his vision by main force into concrete form.

Akhnaton was a mystic, in the simplest sense; a poet, a critic, an internationalist and a lover of peace. In all of these rôles he worked so consistently and diligently as to transform his kingdom within the twelve or fourteen years of his reign.

Repelled by the corruption of religious life in Egypt and the shrouding of pure monotheism in a constantly thickening veil of symbolism, he suppressed first the arrogant priesthood of Amon at Thebes, and then extinguished one by one the parasitic sects that fostered the natural superstition of his people. Nor was this enough. Thebes, the royal city of his race, was tainted by long association with Amon, and the priests were almost more powerful there than the Crown. To the direct genius of the King there was but one remedy. He would humble the city, he would ruin it, by the simple process of removing his court. Into the wilderness he fared, chose a spot which seemed to him rich in those natural beauties which he loved above all else, and there wrought out of nothingness a new capital,

The City of the Horizon, “the mighty City of the Horizon of Aton, great in loveliness, mistress of pleasant ceremonies, rich in possessions, the offering of the sun being in her midst. At the sight of her beauty there is much rejoicing. She is lovely and beautiful: when one sees her it is like a glimpse of heaven.” It must have been such a town as one sometimes sees in sunset clouds: palaces, courts and gardens, lakes shadowed by cool, dark trees.

Here were no dim shrines droning with perpetual chants to occult forces; for the One God whom Akhnaton set up for the worship of his people was Love, the creative spirit moving through all living things and all nature. The rites of this religion were of the simplest. In the courts of the temple, priests and citizens gathered at dawn and at sunset to sing psalms of delight. Many of these, which Akhnaton himself composed, are as fine as any religious poetry of the world. Unlike most religious poetry, their exaltation is strengthened by a contrasting homeliness in which the little creatures, the chick within the egg, the birds in the marsh, all the earth’s children, are remembered and blessed.

The One God could not be expressed in an image; his symbol, the sun-disk with hands outstretched in benediction, was merely to remind men of that ineffable Being, all goodness, the Sun behind the sun. His truest worship, according to the royal mystic, was love in all its forms, family life, friendliness with one’s neighbours.

> The Pharaoh, while encouraging the simple life, did not preach the mortification of the flesh, but only the control of the body. The comforts of life, the brilliancy of decoration, the charms of music, the beauties of painting and sculpture, the pleasure of good company, the tonic of a bowl of wine, were all as acceptable to him, in moderation, as to the Preacher in Ecclesiastes.
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> Unlike Jehovah, who was not infrequently thought to be a wrathful god, surrounded by clouds and darkness, and speaking through the roar of thunders, the Aton was the “Lord of Peace,” who could not tolerate battle and strife. Akhnaton was so opposed to war that he persistently refused to offer an armed resistance to the subsequent revolts which occurred in his Asiatic dominions. . . . In an age of martial glory . . . Akhnaton set himself in opposition to all heroics, and saw God without melodrama.

This was the characteristic that was to cause his downfall. As time went on, he became more and more immersed in the beauty of his dream; the shady streets of the City of the Horizon were an oasis of calm amid a disintegrating empire. The King stood sorrowful but unpersuaded as frantic appeals for an army poured in from his allies. Finally, he “could no longer stave off the impending crash, and from all sides there gathered the forces

which were to overwhelm him. The Government was chaotic. The plotting and scheming of the priests of Amon showed signs of coming to a successful issue. . . . Now through the streets of the city there passed the weary messengers of Asia hurrying to the palace, no longer bearing the appeals of kings and generals for support, but announcing the fall of the last cities of Syria." The King saw his empire crumble, knew that his faith would not outlive him and that his own end was near. "In the imagination there seems to ring across the years a cry of complete despair, and one can picture the emaciated figure of this 'beautiful child of the Aton' fall forward upon the painted palace-floor and lie still amidst the red poppies and dainty butterflies there depicted."

Within ten years after his death, the City of the Horizon was a deserted and ghastly ruin, the priests of Amon were all powerful, the armies of Egypt were eagerly reconquering the lost empire, and the word "Akhnaton" was forbidden to men's lips. The priests poured curses upon the excommunicated and nameless criminal. "Through starry space their execrations passed, searching out the wretched ghost of the boy, and banning him, as they supposed, even in the dim uncertainties of the Lands of Death. Over the hills of the west, up the stairs of the moon, and down into the caverns under the world, the poor twittering shadow was hunted and chased. . . . There was no place for his memory upon earth, and in the underworld the priests denied him a stone upon which to lay his head."

Thus the curtain is again let fall and the light is blotted out. Mr. Weigall's biography of Akhnaton, from which I have quoted, is at once scholarly and inspired. Not a study in Egyptology but a vivid account of an episode in human idealism, this volume should win many friends for the memory of the young Pharaoh as well as for the author.

R. H.. 11. vii. 23.

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## MR. ANDERSON'S NEW STORIES

*Something there is that doesn't love a wall, That wants it down!*

THUS the quizzical farmer in Mr. Frost's best-known poem; and thus, if he spoke blank verse, almost any one of Mr. Sherwood Anderson's nostalgic, solitary personages. The one, I know, is a New Hampshire rebel; the others are farmers and small-town folk of the Middle West; but the difference is not a fundamental one. Mr. Anderson will tell you that his Middle Westerners are but a generation or two removed from New England; that the same frugal blood runs in their contracted veins; that, if they had stone walls to mend, they too would "keep the wall between them as they went." The recurrence throughout his fiction of this isolation-motive is no accident: Mr. Anderson could not be the authentic artist he is and not reflect, like a poet, the deep human truth of the milieu he has undertaken to interpret. One remembers Wing Biddlebaum in "Winesburg," who "did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years." In the tale called "Unused," in his new volume,[1] one recognizes the old predicament: of the girl May Edgely we are told that "if she was walled in, shut off from participation in the life of the Ohio town—hated, feared by the town—she could come out of the town." For the richness of their data, I repeat, these half-dozen stories are worth a library of sociological history, and no one who would know the heart of the Middle West can neglect them. Did such a task ever before or elsewhere force itself upon an artist like Mr. Anderson: the task of depicting a life so clumsily organized for human intercourse, so sterile in the values of personality, so poverty-stricken in what makes for humane conviviality, so hostile (as a consequence) to the integrity of the individual soul?

This, at any rate, is what I read into that singular spiritual delicacy of Mr. Anderson, into what I can only call his passionate puritanism. Only in regard to a life that in some sinister way threatened the purity of the individuals who capitulated to it, would an artist be so concerned for the inviolability of the ego in its resistance to what philosophers call the "not-me." If this intense "idiocrasy" is not what puritanism always amounts to, it is characteristic of puritanism on its highest level: on the level on which Whitman defined the twin principle of democracy as "individuality, the pride and centripetal isolation of a human being in himself—identity—personalism."

The hero of Mr. Anderson's fable is the man who goes among his fellow-beings holding the cup of his "identity" as a kind of Grail, intangible by the profane. The special tragedy is that there are none but the profane to touch it; that the contacts which should be cleansing are for the most part smirching, and the experiences which should be joyously shared have to be joylessly withheld. The result can be only a kind of spiritual deformity. This, I suppose, is what the old man in the foreword to "Winesburg" means when he says "that the moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live his life by it, he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became a falsehood." This is the perplexity of the young man in "A Chicago Hamlet," in this volume, bathing himself in cold water at night in the darkness of his room, obsessed with "this business of making oneself the keeper of the clean integrity of oneself." We are told that he had "a kind of almost holy inner modesty"; and we realize that the pathos of what happens at the end lies in the fugacity of an experience which momentarily offered a relationship not hostile to that modesty.

Like a certain sort of puritan, Mr. Anderson is more interested in the inner life than in anything else; indeed, "this vain show of things" seems to him but an aspect of the inner life, and he is not too curious about the line that divides material from spiritual. This is what gives his fiction its curiously poetic quality, and, in details, accounts for the seemingly unpremeditated beauty of many of his figures. ("My fruit shall not be my fruit until it drops from my arms, into the arms of others, over the top of the wall.") If the word had not too many dusty connotations, one would say that Mr. Anderson was a symbolist; he is at any rate a symbolist without the doctrine, a sort of congenital symbolist: to him the myth is not a theory but an irresistible mode of expression. It will not do to quarrel with him for not being a "realist." Mr. Edmund Wilson objects that none of the personages in "Many Marriages" has a persuasive reality; that they are consistently incredible as washing-machine manufacturers and housekeepers. But surely it should not need to be pointed out that reality exists on several planes; that the reality of "Babbitt," valid as it is, is but one kind of reality; that John Webster is not a washing-machine manufacturer, in any special literal sense, but the man who has walked part way down the road of death and has come back to walk the way of life. The employment of this mythopoetic reality is

Mr. Anderson's special forte, and it can be vindicated on the solidest artistic grounds; it gives form and color to fables of subtle subjective experience which would otherwise be too unsubstantial for artistic treatment. The fiction of the inner life would hardly be possible on any other terms.

It is even doubtful whether we can with accuracy speak of Mr. Anderson as a novelist; at least if that name is to be reserved for writers in the tradition, for the followers of Flaubert (like Mr. Sinclair Lewis) or the followers of Henry James (like Mrs. Wharton). In any sense in which these people are novelists, Mr. Anderson must be denied the title; for their scrupulous account of the extrinsic truth, even for their manipulation of psychological drama, he has but mediocre capacities; he has little command over the cool irony which makes Mr. Lewis something of a satirist, and little skill in the handling of complex personal relationships such as Mrs. Wharton reports. He has almost nothing in common with those "erudite and elegant" writers whom Whitman inveighed against. This is indeed his artistic strength; the methods of the novelists I have mentioned would not begin to serve his special and difficult purpose; they are the fictional analogues of a highly organized, highly civilized, completely articulate social order, and the interpretation of such an order is not Mr. Anderson's task. Hitherto the novelist's rôle has not been much like that of the bard: he has attempted not so much to give utterance to confused communal emotions as to chronicle, either epically or dramatically, and with a certain detachment, the circumstances of the life about him. That he did not come, in the first place, until comparatively late, is a fact of some significance. Mr. Anderson is attempting—more or less unconsciously, no doubt—to fill the rôle of a kind of bardic poet: to put into simple and beautiful forms the vague and troubling pains of a bewildered people, to personalize a rather mechanical life, to give new values to a world that has discarded its old ones as invalid. And that, as the teller of "The Man's Story" says, "is I suppose what poetry is all about."

N. A. 5. xii. 23.

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[1] “Figures of Earth,” James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride Co.

[1] “The Life of Admiral Mahan.” Charles Carlisle Taylor. New York: George H. Doran Company.

[1] “America and the Young Intellectual.” Harold Stearns. New York: George H. Doran Co.

[1] Collection des universités de France, publiée sous le patronage del’Association Guillaume Budé:

Eschyle, Tome I, texte établi et traduit par Paul Mazon; Platon, Tome I, Maurice Croiset; Platon, Tome II, Alfred Croiset; Théophraste, *Caractères*, Octave Navarre; Cicéron, Tome I, H. de la Ville de Mirmont; Juvénal, *Satires*, de Labriolle et Villeneuve; Lucrèce, Tomes I et II, Alfred Ernout; Perse, *Satires*, A. Cartault.

[1] “Ulysses.” James Joyce. Paris: The Shakespeare Press.

[1] “The Outline of Science: A Plain Story Simply Told.” Edited by J. Arthur Thomson. In four volumes. New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons. Vols. I and II.

[2] “The Haunts of Life.” J. Arthur Thomson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

[1] “William De Morgan and His Wife.” A. M. W. Stirling. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

[1] “History of Art.” Elie Faure. Translated by Walter Pach. Vol. I. Ancient Art. Vol. II. MediæVal Art. New York: Harper & Brothers.

[1] “Akhnaton, Pharaoh of Egypt.” Arthur Weigall. New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons.

[1] “Horses and Men.” Sherwood Anderson. New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

# A REVIEWER’S NOTEBOOK

# THE NOVELS OF UPTON SINCLAIR

IN 1889, when the English nation revealed through its press how unwilling it was to be “pried up to a higher level of manhood” by the “Connecticut Yankee,” and was indeed denouncing the book as a travesty, Mark Twain tried to induce Andrew Lang to come to his defence. “The critic assumes, every time,” he wrote, “that if a book doesn’t meet the cultivated-class standard, it isn’t valuable. The critic has actually impressed upon the world the superstition that a painting by Raphael is more valuable to the civilizations of the earth than is a chromo; and the august opera than the hurdy-gurdy and the villagers’ singing society; and Homer than the little everybody’s-poet whose rhymes are in all mouths to-day and will be in nobody’s mouth next generation; and the Latin classics than Kipling’s far-reaching bugle-note. . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels; and they wouldn’t need it. It is not that little minority who are already saved that are best worth trying to uplift, I should think, but the mighty mass of the uncultivated who are underneath.” Whereupon our troubled humorist besought Andrew Lang to “adopt a rule recognizing the Belly and the Members, and formulate a standard whereby work done for them shall be judged.”

It is recorded that Andrew Lang failed to respond to this remarkable appeal. He could scarcely indeed have understood it, knowing as he did so little about the American mind. How such a delusion came to possess Mark Twain would be an interesting study in itself; but it was of the nature of our old democracy to believe that the feelings and opinions of the majority had a sort of divine sanction, the popular being regarded as *ipso facto* good. Under these conditions, a double standard of taste might well have seemed as natural to a man in Mark Twain’s position as that other article of faith of the nineteenth century, the double standard of morals. Yet the “Connecticut Yankee” itself shows us how false the notion was. Mark Twain’s plea was that he was “trying to uplift the mighty mass of the uncultivated.” Actually, in this book, he debased them: he flattered their ignorance of history, he played on their prejudice against the old world, he drew their attention from the abuses of their own social life by focusing their indignation on the long-forgotten abuses of the Middle Ages, he confirmed them in their

complacent belief that a shrewd Yankee mechanic possessed all the secrets of life that anyone ought to desire.

It is with a number of such instances in mind that I have read Mr. Upton Sinclair's three recent novels, "King Coal," "Jimmie Higgins" and "100%: The Story of a Patriot." Judged by the "cultivated-class standard" these books are as bad as books can be; they are so weak, so slovenly, so deficient in all the qualities that go to make a work of art that, as one considers Mr. Sinclair's complaint of the boycott of the press, one asks oneself how far it is not due to the sheer worthlessness of this sort of writing. Novels are novels; from the standpoint of criticism their subject-matter can not save them. It is impossible to interest oneself in "winsome Irish lasses," in pretty stenographers whose "wicked little dimples lose no curtain calls," in "patriots" like Peter Gudge, in paragons like Jimmie Higgins; it is impossible because they do not exist in Mr. Sinclair's own imagination. They have no more existence than the villains and the heroes and the naughty ladies of the movies and the *Red Book Magazine*. Mr. Sinclair has no more respect for psychology than his mine-owners have for their employees; he has no more respect for the intelligence of his readers than Mr. Hearst. His novels are simply "reels" into which he contrives to pack all the sensations that have occurred in the United States during the last four years. To speak merely as a reader, merely from a literary point of view, one can not, with the best will in the world, follow these narratives from page to page.

I am speaking, as I say, from the "cultivated-class" standpoint. And now the question arises whether Mr. Sinclair is any better advised in his attempt to liberate the proletariat by this means than was Mark Twain in "trying to uplift the mighty mass of the uncultivated." In his advertisement of "100%" Mr. Sinclair quotes the opinion of one of his readers that he will have even more trouble than he had with "The Brass Check"—"in getting the books printed fast enough." That was always Mark Twain's trouble, too; and for a similar reason. It is natural that Mr. Sinclair's books should be popular among the dispossessed: they who are so seldom flattered find in his pages a land of milk and honey. Here all the workers wear haloes of pure golden sunlight and all the capitalists have horns and tails; socialists with fashionable English wives invariably turn yellow at the appropriate moment, and rich men's sons are humbled in the dust, Irish lasses are

always true, and wives never understand their husbands, and all the good people are martyred and all the patriots are vile. Mr. Sinclair says that the incidents in his books are based on fact and that his characters are studied from life. No doubt they are. But Mr. Sinclair, naturally enough, has seen what he wanted to see and studied what he wanted to study; and his particular simplification of the social scene is one that inevitably makes glad the heart of the victim of our barbarous system. It fills this victim with emotion, the emotion of hatred and the emotion of self-pity. Mr. Sinclair's novels sell by the hundred thousand: the wonder is they do not sell by the million.

But suppose now that one wishes to see the dispossessed rise in their might and really, in the name of justice, take possession of the world. Suppose one wishes to see the class-system abolished, along with all the other unhappy things that Mr. Sinclair writes about. That is Mr. Sinclair's own desire; and he honestly believes that in writing as he does he contributes to this happy consummation. I can not agree with him. In so far as Mr. Sinclair's books show us anything real they show us the utter helplessness, the benightedness, the ignorance, the *naïveté* of the American proletarian movement. Jimmie Higgins, as I have said, does not exist as a character. He is a symbol, however, and one can read reality into him. He is the American worker incarnate. Well, was there ever a worker so little the master of his fate? That, in point of fact, is just the conclusion Mr. Sinclair wishes us to draw! But why is he so helpless? Because, for all his goodness and his kindness and his courage, he is, from an intellectual and social point of view, unlike the English worker, and the German worker, and the French, and the Italian, and the Russian worker, an infant: he knows nothing about life or about human nature or about economics or about philosophy or even about his enemies. How can he possibly improve his condition, how can he set about advancing his own cause, how can he circumvent the wily patrioteers, how can he become anything but what he is, the mere football of every one who knows more than he? Let us drop the "cultivated-class" standpoint, for a moment, and judge Mr. Sinclair's novels from the standpoint of the proletariat itself. How do they appear now? They arouse the emotion of self-pity. Does that stimulate the worker or does it merely "console" him? They arouse the emotion of hatred. Does that teach him how to grapple with his oppressors or does it place him all the more at his

oppressors' mercy? The most elementary knowledge of human nature tells us that there is only one answer to these questions.

The American workers' movement is weak: that we know. The workers' movements of Europe are, in comparison, strong: that we also know. But why are they strong? Because the masses of individuals that compose them are, relatively speaking, not intellectual and moral infants but instructed, well-developed, self-conscious, self-respecting, resourceful men. They waste little energy in "hating" their masters; they are too busy learning to understand them. They waste still less energy in pitying themselves; they are too busy establishing their rights. How much of this superior *morale* they owe to their superior education, i. e., to literature, I shall not attempt to repeat; Mr. Max Eastman might contradict me again. But one thing is certain: nothing hinders the worker so much as books like Mr. Sinclair's. These false simplifications, these appeals to the martyr in human nature, these travesties of the psychology of the powerful ones of the earth are so much dust thrown in the eyes of the proletariat. To the workers themselves, in other words, Mr. Sinclair, with his cake and circuses, is more dangerous than all the Big Business men whom he chastises with whips and scorpions.

To return, then, to the "cultivated-class standard," I respectfully urge that a book which is not good enough for me is not good enough for Mr. Sinclair's readers either. I further maintain that the only writers who can possibly aid in the liberation of humanity are those whose sole responsibility is to themselves as artists. Consider the very best novels that have been written with a view to propaganda alone. Consider "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Mrs. Stowe undoubtedly helped to liberate the Negroes from slavery; but there would be few in our generation to deny that she "liberated" them from the frying-pan into the fire. She evoked the emotion of self-pity and the emotion of hatred, but she failed to make her readers think; and because of this, the last state of the Negro is all but worse than the first. On the other hand, consider Turgenev who, in his "Sportman's Sketches," wrote to please himself alone. He revealed the serf not as an Uncle Tom, a bleary, teary wax image, but as a man like the rest of us, capable of pride, faith and thought; and the result was that the conscience of Russia has been occupied with nothing since but to rescue that same proud, faithful, thinking man and reinstate him in his rights. The wind bloweth where it listeth: no writer can tell *how* his work will serve. One can only say

that if he does his work, and if he is sincere and has the talent, it can not help serving, and in the most unforeseen ways. Thus, for example, Gorky in his autobiography describes how he got his first revolutionary feeling from Dumas, of all writers in the world. As a boy he used to pore over Dumas's romances, and it astonished him to hear of a society in which people were polite to one another and considerate of one another. The streets of Paris became his Utopia, and it was then he began to dream of a day when his own Russia, the Russia of the disinherited, might also have its share of social grace and beauty. That was because Dumas, insincere as he was in other respects, conveyed a sincere picture of fine manners. "The persons," said Shelley (apropos of literature, and expressing the whole truth), "the persons in whom this power takes its abode may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little correspondence with the spirit of good of which it is the minister. But although they may deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve that which is seated on the throne of their own soul. And whatever systems they may have professed by support, they actually advance the interests of Liberty."

V. W. B. 21. ix. 21

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## JOHN BUTLER YEATS

MY memory of John Butler Yeats goes back to 1908, to a little gaslit bedroom in the old Grand Union Hotel, whither I had been taken to meet the "father of the poet." At that time the Irish Literary Revival was at its height, and there were no names more glamorous than Yeats and Synge. The "father of the poet," with his air of a benevolent sage, looked the part to perfection; looked it and spoke it indeed so perfectly that he shone at first only with innumerable reflected lights. He had come to America for a fortnight; he was to stay for thirteen years. He was to experience between the ages of sixty-nine and eighty-three a second career as affluent as his first had been. How soon it was to be forgotten that he was the father of the poet at all! In that early time—it was natural enough—he pulled for us at all the strings of association. If he had not seen Shelley plain, he had been as an art student a commensal of Samuel Butler and William Morris; he had been one of the first Whitmanians—Whitman sent him his "affectionate

remembrance” in a letter of 1872; for forty years he had agreed with York Powell and disagreed with Edward Dowden; he had known the father of Wilde and the mother of Shaw. All these recollections he poured out for us in the most enchanting stream of anecdotes—he was fairly lost for us, I say, in his own good talk.

His earlier career, to be sure, had been wanting in no element of the illuminative, when it was not the paradoxical. It was the career, as rumour told us, of genius in solution, or at least not too forbiddingly crystallized, the career of being human to such a tune that two generations of Irish poets and artists had grown up literally under its wing. The story of Mr. Yeats’s Dublin studio is to be found in Miss Katharine Tynan’s autobiography and I do not know how many other books, just as the record of his influence is to be found in his elder son’s “Reveries over Childhood and Youth.” Never, surely, had a man been more the cause of a more various wit in others, and this without prejudice to his having been—shall I say?—the Reynolds of a stirring age in his nation’s history. He had painted all the distinguished, the interesting, the charming men and women of his time, painted them with such insight and such grace that his gathered work constitutes of itself—remote as it must have been from any suggestion of the public, the official—a sort of National Portrait Gallery. He would not paint the dull, if only, it might seem, because it was they who wished to pay him for his trouble: it was the angel of impecuniosity, I remember his remarking, that had given him his freedom, a sensitive angel, no doubt, whose protection he wished not to jeopardize. His studio was thus never closed save to clients—he would fly to escape from a lucrative commission which meant that there would not be good talk during the sittings, the good talk that implied a current of sympathy. Nor was this merely petulant: he could paint only those whom he saw, and he could see only those whom he admired. He painted, as Swinburne criticized, for the “noble pleasure of praising.” In this, as in so many other respects, his fashion was that of the ancients; and one can not but think that his pride, and all this multiform expression of his pride, must have had its effect in the rebirth of the Irish spirit.

Such questions, to be sure, could have had no interest for Mr. Yeats himself. “Your artist and poet, unless he becomes a rhetorician,” he wrote in one of his last essays, “is a solitary and self-immersed in his own thoughts and has no desire to impress other people.” It was thus that we were to see

him, a true solitary himself, and never more so than when he most suggested (to those who did not know him) the autocrat of the dinner-table. But as time went on I think his interest in painting in a measure dropped away. When he first came to New York it was still strong; in the early days at Petitpas' he always had a sketch-book in his pocket and would draw as he talked; to the end his letters, his briefest notes, were usually adorned with a little pen-and-ink impression—of himself, as a rule, and not too hasty to fix some humorous or ironic "state of the soul." I imagine, however, that few of the portraits he did here were as good as those he had done at home, perhaps because his sitters were not initiated into the secret, which must have been legendary in Dublin, that unless his pictures were carried off, tactfully but forcibly, at the right moment, he was sure to overpaint and spoil them. His son speaks of his having painted a pond somewhere in Ireland: "He began it in spring and painted all through the year, the picture changing with the seasons, and gave it up unfinished when he had painted the snow upon the heath-covered banks." Every one discovered this trait sooner or later, but in New York it was usually later: it was not the open secret it might have been if his American suitors had been in a position to compare notes. And besides, who could escape from his presence?—like Socrates, he was a flute-player more wonderful than Marsyas, who charmed us with the voice only. His art suffered in consequence, for he required the cooperation of a practical and resolute sitter. Alas, he should have painted only men without ears.

It was at Petitpas' that his star rose for us. He had found his way to that friendly house within a year of his arrival, and was not to leave it again; and there he had his "Indian summer of the mind," a Jovian old age without any visible counterpart in a country where age as well as youth obeys the counsel of Mr. Rockefeller—not to talk but to saw wood. For his play of conversation he required no such preliminaries as Sarah Battle—there was no rigour in Mr. Yeats's game; yet one condition he would not forego, a clear, abundant light. He disliked the duplicity of the candle-lit American interior; he wished to follow the expressions of his interlocutors and would recall the luminous mahogany-tables of old that reflected the dazzling chandelier and brightened the faces from below as they were brightened from above. The lights were high in Twenty-ninth Street—witness John Sloan's portrait-group, "Yeats at Petitpas'," or even George Bellows's

murky lithograph of the same subject. It was really characteristic, this desire, for it signified that our philosopher could not have loved art so much had he not loved human nature more.

His conversation was all of human nature. It flowed with every sort of engaging contradiction, with a wisdom by turns cheerful and tragic and a folly that was always somehow wise. Again, it was always concrete, at least in the earlier time. Mr. W. B. Yeats tells us that when he was a boy his father would choose to read to him the “less abstract” poets; he preferred Keats to Shelley and the first half of “Prometheus Unbound” to the second. During the last few years the metaphysical habit grew upon him and, as he had a terminology all his own, it was sometimes difficult to follow him. Yet even then, as he would distinguish between “feeling” and “emotion,” for instance, or “brains” and “intellect,” one discerned his point without, so to say, perceiving it—nothing annoyed him so much as to be pressed for a definition. Besides, his point never failed to bury itself in one’s mind: one would find oneself puzzling it out years afterward. He had lost some of his mischievousness, so that he would no longer maintain, for instance, that the English are even inferior tailors, and that they are such good poets because they are tyrants in their own houses, but he still clothed his discourse in the gayest web of images. He would say of the difference between a photograph and a portrait that the photograph is like the description of a ball given by a jaded, bored, literal-minded old chaperon, the painting like a description of the same ball given by a pretty girl who has thoroughly enjoyed herself. He would picture the Puritan minister “sitting in company with the father of the family in a sort of horrid conspiracy to poison life at its sources.” He would tell of some Irish peasant who, describing a well-dressed man, added that he “fell away in the breeches.” Or he would call up some picture from the past, as, for instance, of John Richard Green, in the days when he was known as a brilliant man who had done nothing and was not expected to do anything—of Green, in some drawing-room, surrounded by admirers, and remarking in a high chant: “All women seek to combine two mutually incompatible positions—the position of perfect strength and the position of perfect weakness.”

He had forgotten nothing that revealed human nature at its most singular, its most touching, its most absurd, above all its most characteristic. He could forgive anything but rhetoric, legality, emotionality and

gregariousness—these were his four abominations. He had had reason in his own country to deplore the folly of the oratorical mind; and regarding legality his opinion was much the same as St. Paul's, that it was the "strength of sin"—perhaps he was the more certain of this because he had begun life as a lawyer himself. As for his dislike of the emotional and the gregarious, it may have been a result of certain American experiences: I know that his opinion of Whitman changed entirely after he had lived here for a while. Having admired him for years he turned against the "emotional bard," remarking in one of his later letters, "The Sacred Nine have not heard his name even to this day." Nor was he free from reservations in regard to the Celtic Revival; I remember his horror, for instance, when a rather gushing lady accused him of having had some commerce with fairies. The truth is that he was at bottom an old-fashioned Anglo-Irish country gentleman, redolent of the classics, a sceptic of the eighteenth-century tradition, or of the tradition of Erasmus and Montaigne, who had also drunk in his youth at the spring of "political economy" and John Stuart Mill; and upon this foundation had been superadded, to the confusion of the simple, the doctrines of Rossetti in painting, of Morris in economics and of Irish Nationalism in the political sphere. It was a combination that made for an infinite, if a somewhat bewildering, wit—a wit that drew the line just the other side of the banshee.

"Idleness and conversation" was his only formula for the good life. Like the "Be hard!" or the "Carefully cultivate your faults" of other sages, it was a stumbling-block to the foolish, among whom Mr. Yeats counted the population of Belfast and those who have "leather" faces and pursue the dollar. In his own case it signified an activity of the mind and the feelings that knew no check; for if his painting had lapsed, he wrote his first play at seventy-eight and was experimenting in poetry to the last week of his life. His "high-bred amicability," to quote Goethe's phrase about Molière, was a veritable school of manners, of the natural in manners; and he was always quick to draw out the least articulate of his companions. How many must have blessed him who had never known, till they talked with him, that they too had something to say! But what seems most fortunate now is that his exile turned him more and more to writing—the three books that will give him a distinguished place in literature were all written in America. For years he had been urged to write his reminiscences—York Powell, as we

discover in the latter's published correspondence, suggested it a generation ago; and his "Recollections of Samuel Butler" shows us what the book would have been, or perhaps will be, for he left a mass of manuscripts that must include many a pendant to that diverting and picturesque impression. What does it matter? He drew his own portrait in every line he wrote. Had the "Pensees" of Pascal taken their final shape we should have had only the same Pascal, plus the mortar of "rhetoric": and it is all the more characteristic that in Mr. Yeats's record we should miss the connecting links he so cheerfully ignored in life.

From these essays and these letters,[1] the thought drifts up, as Mr. Ezra Pound says, "as easily as a cloud in the heavens, and as clear-cut as clouds on bright days." In the essays his conversation lives again; in the letters we find it recollected, as it were, in tranquillity, soberer than his wont was, if only because more studied. Yet everywhere the effect is of a pure spontaneity. He will mention "the most deliriously uninteresting young girl I ever met, her perfect aplomb in selfishness was a perpetual surprise and pleasure." He will say that a "perfectly disinterested, an absolutely unselfish love of making mischief, mischief for its own dear sake, is an Irish characteristic." He will speak in this fashion of the "dungeon of self-hatred which is Puritanism":

> The supremacy of the will power infers the malediction of human nature that has cursed English life and English letters. I referred to Bunyan as foremost in the malediction movement. He would have called Hamlet "Mr. Facing Both-Ways," and Juliet "Miss Bold Face" or "Carnality," and Romeo ‘‘Mr. Lovelorn," and Macbeth "Mr. Henpecked," etc., finding where he could epithets and names to belittle and degrade the temple of human nature and all its altars.

He will press to the depths and return with this:

> "Except for one or two I have never had a happy day," said the magnificently fortunate Goethe. The never dying aches of the probe of pain are in every bosom; only while others resort to some kind of laudanum the poets let these work, finding in them the root of happiness, the only sort which, though it be twin with sorrow, is without a fleck on its purity.

He will recur to those leading ideas—that "desire and not emotion is the substance of art," that "character is the self-evolved enemy of personality," that "in obeying rules, the highest even, we shall never forget that in so doing we are not alive"—which underlay all his other thoughts and expressed his own "certitude of belief." His mind was of such a perfect

candour that the printed page reproduces it like a sensitive plate; we hear him talking as we read, we see him stoop and smile.

No doubt the novelty of his American experience, the sharp contrast with everything he had previously known, led him thus to define his point of view. His essays on “The Modern Woman” and “Back to the Home” are markedly the fruit of such a reaction: in the presence of our chaos the disparate elements in his own mind, in his life, in his memory, flew together and he rose above them in harmonious flight. So we may say that America had its share in the making of him. It was his energy, he said, a month before he died, that kept him in his adventurous exile; but he also stayed because he liked us. That was a great compliment, and one we shall not forget.

V. W. B. I. iii. 22.

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## DON MARQUIS

READING and re-reading Mr. Don Marquis’s last book (for who can helping reading it again and again?) makes me wish mightily once more that there were in this country a permanent medium for work of just this literary character, both in prose and verse. It brings back, in short, my visions of a competent American comic paper; and those visions bring impatience in their train, because I am so well convinced that the only thing needful for the production of such a paper is the combination of a publisher and an editor who really know their business—a publisher who can see beyond the end of his nose, who has a little stability, courage and resourcefulness, and an editor whose literary sensibilities are hung on a hair-trigger, who really knows what he wants and why he wants it, and who has an adamantine resolution against everything that he does not want, even if he has to go to press with blank pages. I can hear my readers saying, *There! he is off on his old hobby again;* but I shall disappoint them. I am quite through with anatomizing and describing the ideal comic paper, the ideal publisher and editor; and I now mean only to say a word or two about the literary resources of the country as exemplified by Mr. Marquis, and what might be done with them.

Mr. Marquis's "Sonnets to a Red-Haired Lady" and especially his "Famous Love-Affairs" are, one would say, the recreations of a literary man. They have that quality; the quality which one finds in Field, Lowell, Harte, Holmes, Gilbert, Thackeray, Lord Neaves, and so on all the way back to the Greek Anthology. There is no external resemblance between Mr. Marquis and any of these; the resemblance is purely internal, and it is unmistakable. It places Mr. Marquis's work as far remote from the ruck of commonplace, clever, comic verse of what is known as the commercial type, as Dr. Holmes's "Poem Made to Order" or his lines "On a Portrait of a Gentleman." It has ease, leisureliness, abundant natural humour—and under the dismaying prevalence of artificial humour, of pert galvanic smartness, how thankful one may be for that! It has playfulness and elegance; Mr. Marquis's literary taste guides him safely over bogs of slang and colloquialism that would swamp an unsound taste at the second step. For example, let the reader mark the extraordinary poetic beauty of the first three lines of this stanza from Mr. Marquis's version of the story of Tristram and Iseult, and observe that a less sensitive taste than Mr. Marquis's could not possibly have managed the transition from them to what follows, without a sad jolt; but he so manages it that one goes along with perfect ease, with no sense of incongruity.

> Tristram rode by her palace on a day
> When some young angel leaned from Paradise
> And loved the earth, and laughed, and made it May;
> And Issy saw his lovely purple eyes—
> Not the young angel's; Tristram's: otherwise
> She might have flagged the angel for her beau
> Instead of Tristram. Ah! what tears and sighs
> Were saved if women never looked below
> The angels!—yet, no doubt, at times they'd find it slow.

To accomplish successfully such a transition as this is a truly respectable achievement. Like the circle of Giotto, it is no doubt a *tour de force*, but it is nevertheless something that can not be extemporized, still less done in a mechanical or purely imitative way. It is an infallible proof of a good literary man's experienced hand and cultivated taste; and any editor worth his salt would at once discern it as such. Again, Mr. Marquis ends his sequence to the Red-Haired Lady, after thirty-two sonnets which may be fairly sampled thus:

Against what background should I paint your head—
Relieved upon such paler gold as falls
Through groined and mullioned windows on the walls
Of storied minsters, crumbling like their dead?
I will not paint it, Kid; your sort of red,
As full of pep as red-hot cannon-balls,
Titians must splash across the frescoed halls.
Mine ain't the art for it, when all is said.

—after thirty-two sonnets-worth of this, I say, he ends his sequence with four sonnets of excellent seriousness, grace and force, and again the transition is made naturally and easily. They are as much in place as the dedicatory verse of "Alice in Wonderland." Then, as the last of the Famous Love-Affairs, Mr. Marquis takes the old story of Harlequin and Columbine, and gives it a wholly fresh and charming turn in serious verse; and such is the fineness of taste displayed among all his preceding colloquialisms, that once more he manages the transition perfectly. Even when Mr. Marquis ventures farthest into slang and colloquialism, as in his sketch of Iseult and her husband, Mark of Cornwall—

Mark was a Pill. His little Dame had class,
(One of those Unions that neglect to une),
She was a Saint; he was a Hound. Alas,
That such a Peach should marry such a Prune!

—even under this stress his taste is delightfully sure; it carries him unerringly, and his reader with him, leaving mere smartness and vulgarity miles aside.

But I must not become so taken up with Mr. Marquis's literary quality as to forget the point that I set out to make. I am sure, though one swallow does not make a summer, that there are others, perhaps many others, whose quality is at least comparable with that of Mr. Marquis, and who might show themselves as much at home amidst the higher order of literary serio-frivolities, if they had some definite and continuous encouragement; and my point is that nothing is so well calculated to provide this encouragement as a really competent comic paper. As things now are, there is but one place, and that a most disadvantageous one, for work like Mr. Marquis's to appear, namely: the "column." But a newspaper is an ephemeral, unconsidered thing, its contents sheer trash, and I am sure that Mr. Marquis will assent to

my saying that the average of the column rises little above the average of the paper. Small wonder that it is so; the Hyrcanian tiger seems a biddable and domestic creature, when one thinks of the devouring exactions of a daily column that shall not be sheer trash.

Well, then, work of any literary value, even the most moderate, is here practically scattered in a rubbish-heap. It is solitary, lost, easily overlooked, and put at a disadvantage by its environment, since one does not expect to find anything of value in such a place and hence is not looking for it. I remember, for example, an excellent metrical parody by Mr. Marquis that I saw years ago in the *Sun*, remarking upon the eclipse of all the host of Kipling's imitators who were once so plentiful, and wondering what had become of them. It was done in really brilliant first-class Kiplingese. I neglected to clip it and shall probably never get hold of it again; and the memory of it has persecuted me ever since, for I can recall only the last line of the first verse:

> O ye sons of Kip, have ye lost your grip, are ye feared to throw the bull?

Could anything be better, either as parody or criticism?—and the poem in its entirety was quite as good as that line. The other day, too, I noticed that in the Chicago *News*, by way of comment on some remarks of mine about our English contemporary *Punch*, Mr. Keith Preston wrote an admirable verse in *Punch's* best characteristic style. It was so good that I could not help regretting that there was here no medium for it like *Punch* itself, a periodical which would afford a gifted and scholarly person like Mr. Keith Preston an organized public, looking to it regularly for just the kind of thing that he can furnish, expecting it, and appreciating it when it came.

I have never been quite as despondent as some of my friends appear to be, concerning the potential literary resources of this country; believing rather that no very serious critical effort has yet been made to tap and develop those resources. The *Freeman*, in its short life and within the scope of its mode or method—no periodical, probably, can undertake to work in every genre—has certainly brought out from American writers, chiefly, too, from non-professional writers, a large amount of extremely good writing, plenty good enough for anybody. It has also served as a focus for a considerable public which looks for, expects and appreciates literary work

of a certain well-established quality. A periodical specializing not so much in another field as in another mode, would, I believe, have the same good fortune. It would perhaps even more attract the non-professional than the professional writer. We all remember excellent parodies in prose and verse, keen burlesques, trenchant criticism of society and public affairs, that passed from hand to hand in our college days or later, written for the most part by gifted amateurs and never published, though the Editor's Drawer of the old *Harper's Magazine* used to make some sort of place for these, and occasionally got them. We all remember Mr. Child's extravaganza called "Il Pesceballo," and the trifles that Mr. Peck used to do when he held the chair of Latin at Columbia, and before he became a professional writer. I can not be sure that Dr. Holmes's son, for example, does not sometimes amuse himself and his friends with some brisk literary satire or frivolity. Above all, I am not sure that our whole reading public is hopelessly unable and unwilling to accept and appreciate this sort of literary work, if only it knew where it could get it with fair regularity and under some sort of guarantee of its quality.

The thing, then, which I should say that Mr. Marquis's book indicates as advisable, is a loose progressive organization of writers and readers, such as would be affected by a new type of periodical; say, by a new, wholly different and greatly improved *Life* or *Judge*. The whole history of American periodical-publishing in recent years has been a history of this process of organization, usually for purposes that are inferior and non-literary. Multitudes of writers have had their public as truly manufactured for them by the machinery of the publishing-business as though it had been run out of a hopper like so much grist. Before sitting down with folded hands in melancholy contemplation of our fallen literary estate, let us at least employ this process to make sure that it has actually fallen as low as we think it has, or as a superficial view may indicate that it has. Why not see what a new *Life* or *Judge* or a resurrected *Puck* might do; a paper that would make a home for work like that of Mr. Marquis or Mr. Keith Preston —the work, that is, that they themselves are really interested in doing, not the work that they do with their left hand, perforce, and against time, to fill a column; a paper, moreover, that would be so jealous of its contributors' pride and self-respect that it would not tumble them in, hugger-mugger, to pig together with all manner of low and contemptible company? Thus I

come back to my old topic once more, my old hobby, and if I once set foot in the stirrup, I shall be riding bravely off again, in spite of my promise to my readers. My excuse, however, for dwelling on this topic so explicitly and recurring to it so often, is that of all types of writing, this one which is so admirably represented by Mr. Marquis has the least and poorest chance among us, whereas it ought to have the best; for it is the very salt and spice of literature, and a proper respect for it is the mark of cultural maturity.

A. J. N. 12. vii. 22.

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## LETTERS OF AMBROSE BIERCE

THE Book Club of California has done a service to all lovers of good writing and fine printing in issuing a collection of the letters of Ambrose Bierce,[1] and I wish it were possible for more readers to possess themselves of the book. No better craftsman in words than Bierce has lived in this country for many a day, and his letters might well have introduced him to the larger public that, even now, scarcely knows his name. A public of four hundred, however, if it happens to be a picked public, is a possession not to be despised, for the cause of an author's reputation is safer in the hands of a few Greeks than in those of a multitude of Persians. "It is not the least pleasing of my reflections," Bierce himself remarks, "that my friends have always liked my work—or me—well enough to want to publish my books at their own expense." His wonderful volume of tales, "In the Midst of Life," was rejected, strange as it seems, by virtually every publisher in the country; the list of the sponsors of his other books is a catalogue of unknown names, and the collected edition of his writings might almost have been regarded as a secret among friends. "Among what I may term 'underground reputations,'" Mr. Arnold Bennett once observed, "that of Ambrose Bierce is perhaps the most striking example." The taste, the skill and the devotion with which his letters have been edited indicate, however, that, limited as this reputation is, it is destined for a long and healthy life.

It must be said at once that all the letters in the volume were written after the author's fiftieth year. They thus throw no light upon his early career, upon his development, or even upon the most active period of his

creative life, for in 1893 he had already ceased to write stories. Moreover, virtually all these letters are addressed to his “pupils,” as he called them, young men and women who were interested in writing, and to whom he liked nothing better than to give advice. We never see him among his equals, his intimates or his contemporaries; he appears invariably as the benevolent uncle of the gifted beginner, and we receive a perhaps quite erroneous impression that this, in his later life, was Bierce’s habitual rôle. Had he no companions of his own age, no correspondents, no ties, no society? A lonelier man, if we are to accept the testimony of this book, never existed. He speaks of having met Mark Twain, and he refers to two or three Californian writers of the older generation; he lived for many years in Washington, chiefly, as one gathers, in the company of other old army men, few of whom had ever heard that he had written a line; he mentions Percival Pollard; otherwise he seems to have had no acquaintances in the East, while with the West, with San Francisco at least, he seems to have been on the worst of terms. San Francisco, his home for a quarter of a century, he describes as “the paradise of ignorance, anarchy and general yellowness. . . . It needs,” he remarks elsewhere, “another quake, another whiff of fire, and—more than all else—a steady trade wind of grapeshot.” It was this latter—grapeshot is just the right word—that Bierce himself poured into that “moral penal colony,” the worst, as he avers, “of all the Sodoms and Gomorrahs in our modern world”; and his collection of satirical epigrams shows us how much he detested it. To him San Francisco was all that London was to Pope, the Pope of “The Dunciad”; but it was a London without any delectable Twickenham villas or learned Dr. Arbuthnots or gay visiting Voltaires. Bierce’s mind had nothing upon which to feed but the few books, old and well tried, that had nourished his youth. One can only guess how much more effective his life would have been if it had been passed in a congenial atmosphere of living ideas.

To the barrenness of his environment is to be attributed, no doubt, the trivial and ephemeral character of so much of his work; for while his interests were parochial, his outlook, as these letters reveal it, was broadly human. With his air of a somewhat dandified Strindberg—I am glancing at the frontispiece of the book—he combined what might be described as a temperament of the eighteenth century. It was natural to him to write in the manner of Pope, whom he admired prodigiously; lucidity, precision,

“correctness” in style were the qualities that he most admired; he was full of the pride of individuality, absolutely fearless and utterly indifferent to public opinion; and the same man who spent so much of his energy “exploring the ways of hate,” was, in his personal life, the serenest of stoics. The son of a “poor farmer” in Ohio, he had had no formal education. How did he acquire such firmness and clarity of mind? He was a natural aristocrat, and he developed a rudimentary philosophy of aristocracy which, under happier circumstances, might have made him a great figure in the world of American thought. Had he come into contact with the best current ideas in his own line, had he lived in the centre, there is no telling how far he might have gone. But America is too large, and the America of his day was too chaotic. It has remained for Mr. Mencken to develop and popularize, with more learning but with less refinement, the views that Bierce expressed in “The Shadow on the Dial.”

Some of these views appear in his letters, enough to show us how complete was his antipathy to the dominant spirit of his age. He disliked humanitarianism as much as he liked humanism, or would have liked it if he had had the opportunity. He invented the word peasant in Mr. Mencken’s sense, as applied, that is, to such worthies as James Whitcomb Riley. “The world does not wish to be helped,” he says. “The poor wish only to be rich, which is impossible, not to be better. They would like to be rich in order to be worse, generally speaking.” His contempt for socialism was unbounded. Of literary men holding Tolstoy’s views he remarks that they are not artists at all: “They are ‘missionaries’ who, in their zeal to lay about them, do not scruple to seize any weapon that they can lay their hands on; they would grab a crucifix to beat a dog. The dog is well beaten, no doubt (which makes him a worse dog than he was before), but note the condition of the crucifix!” All this in defence of literature and what he regards as its proper function. Of Shaw and, curiously, Ibsen, he observes that they are “very small men, pets of the drawing-room and gods of the hour”; he abhors Whitman, on the score equally of sentiment and form; and of Mr. Upton Sinclair’s early hero he writes as follows:

> I suppose there are Arthur Sterlings among the little fellows, but if genius is not serenity, fortitude and reasonableness I don’t know what it is. One can not even imagine Shakespeare or Goethe bleeding over his work and howling when “in the fell clutch of circumstance.” The great ones are figured in my mind as ever smiling—a little sadly at times, perhaps, but always with conscious

inaccessibility to the pinpricking little Titans that would storm their Olympus armed with ineffectual disasters and popgun misfortunes. Fancy a fellow wanting, like Arthur Sterling, to be supported by his fellows in order that he may write what they don't want to read!

Bierce was consistent: his comments on his own failure to achieve recognition are all in the spirit of this last contemptuous remark. "I have pretty nearly ceased to be 'discovered,'" he writes to one of his friends, "but my notoriety as an obscurian may be said to be world-wide and apparently everlasting." Elsewhere, however, he says: "It has never seemed to me that the 'unappreciated genius' had a good case to go into court with, and I think he should be promptly non-suited. . . . Nobody compels us to make things that the world does not want. We merely choose to because the pay, *plus* the satisfaction, exceeds the pay alone that we get from work that the world does want. Then where is our grievance? We get what we prefer when we do good work; for the lesser wage we do easier work." Sombre and at times both angry and cynical as Bierce's writing may seem, no man was ever freer from personal bitterness. If he was out of sympathy with the life of his time and with most of its literature, he adored literature itself, according to his lights. It is this dry and at the same time whole-souled enthusiasm that makes his letters so charming. Fortunate was the circle of young writers that possessed so genial and so severe a master.

One forms the most engaging picture of the old man "wearing out the paper and the patience" of his friends, reading to them Mr. Ezra Pound's "Ballade of the Goodly Fere." Where poetry is in question, nothing is too small to escape his attention, no day long enough for the counsel and the appreciation he has to give. "I don't worry about what my contemporaries think of me," he writes to his favourite pupil. "I made 'em think of *you*—that's glory enough for one." Every page of his book bears witness to the sincerity of this remark. Whether he is advising his "little group of gifted obscurians" to read Landor, Pope, Lucian or Burke, or elucidating some point of style, or lecturing them on the rudiments of grammar, or warning them against the misuse of literature as an instrument of "reform," or conjuring them not to "edit" their thought for somebody whom it may pain, he exemplifies his own dicta, that, on the one hand, "literature and art are about all that the world really cares for in the end," and on the other that, in

considering the work of his friends, a critic should “keep his heart out of his head.” Let me quote two or three other observations that are equally good:

> One can not be trusted to feel until one has learned to think.
>
> Must one be judged by his average, or may he be judged, on occasion, by his highest? He is strongest who can lift the greatest weight, not he who habitually lifts lesser ones.
>
> A writer should, for example, forget that he is an American and remember that he is a man. He should be neither Christian, nor Jew, nor Buddhist, nor Mohammedan, nor Snake Worshipper. To local standards of right and wrong he should be civilly indifferent. In the virtues, so-called, he should discern only the rough notes of a general expediency; in fixed moral principles only time-saving predecisions of cases not yet before the court of conscience. Happiness should disclose itself to his enlarging intelligence as the end and purpose of life; art and love as the only means to happiness. He should free himself of all doctrines, theories, etiquettes, politics, simplifying his life and mind, attaining clarity with breadth and unity with height. To him a continent should not seem wide nor a century long, etc. etc.

This is evidently a “set piece”; but behind its rhetoric one discerns the feeling of a genuine humanist.

In certain ways, to be sure, this is a rather sad book. At seventy-one Bierce set out for Mexico “with a pretty definite purpose,” as he wrote, “which, however, is not at present disclosable.” From this journey he never returned, nor since 1913 has any word ever been received from him. What was that definite purpose? What prompted him to undertake so mysterious an expedition? Was it the hope of exchanging death by “old age, disease, or falling down the cellar stairs” for the “euthanasia” of death in action? He had come to loathe the civilization in which he lived, and his career had been a long tale of defeat. Of journalism he said that it is “a thing so low that it can not be mentioned in the same breath with literature”; nevertheless, to journalism he had given nine-tenths of his energy. It is impossible to read his letters without feeling that he was a starved man; but certainly it can be said that, if his generation gave him very little, he succeeded in retaining in his own life the poise of an Olympian.

V. W. B. 17. i. 23.

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## MOBY-DICK

So much has been written lately about “Moby-Dick” that I hesitate to bring the subject up again; but the beautifully clear and spacious pages of the new collected edition of Melville have beguiled me into reading the book a third time, and I am wondering if all its felicities have dawned even yet on people’s minds. It seems to me now less chaotic, better shaped, than it seemed at first: nothing has surprised me more than to discover how conscious Melville was of what he was doing. I had taken too seriously the statement with which he opens Chapter LXXXII: “There are some enterprises in which a careful disorderliness is the true method”—or rather, I had not placed enough weight on this word “careful.” It seemed to me intolerable that he had not removed the chapters on whales in general, on whaling, whales’ heads, pitchpoling, ambergris, the try-works, ete., and published them separately: they were glorious, but I could not believe that they had been deliberately introduced to retard the action. It struck me that the action should have been retarded as it were within the story. I do not feel this now. The book is an epic, and an epic requires ballast. Think of the catalogue of ships in Homer, the mass of purely historical information in the “*Æ*neid,” the long descriptions in “Paradise Lost”: how immensely these elements add to the density and the volume of the total impression, and how they serve to throw into relief the gestures and activities of the characters! This freight of inanimate or partially inanimate material gives “Moby-Dick” its bottom, its body, in the vintner’s phrase; and I am convinced that Melville knew exactly what he was about.

It is only when we have grasped the nature of the book that we begin to perceive how cunning is its craftsmanship throughout. Of the larger lines I shall speak presently; but glance for a moment at the single episode of Father Mapple’s sermon in the Whaleman’s Chapel. Why is it that, once read, this episode seems to have built itself permanently into the tissues of our imagination? It is because of the skill with which Melville has excluded from our minds every irrelevant detail. He wishes, first, to establish the nautical character of the preacher, so he has him stoop down, after he has climbed into the pulpit, and drag up the ladder step by step, till the whole is deposited within. This may have been taken from reality, for Father Mapple is known to have been drawn from Father Taylor, Emerson’s friend, the apostle to the sailors in Boston. But Melville’s skill here consists in not remarking that Father Mapple might have been boarding a ship: the image

already conveys this connotation—Melville uses it to heighten our sense of the preacher's momentary "withdrawal from all outward worldly ties and connexions." This nautical character, moreover, is preserved by every detail of the sketch. When Father Mapple kneels and prays, his prayer is so deeply devout that he seems to be "kneeling and praying at the bottom of the sea." When he rises, he begins to speak "in prolonged solemn tones, like the continual tolling of a bell in a ship that is foundering at sea in a fog." This impression, once established, is maintained by the imagery of the sermon; but, to pass to another point, why do we remember the sermon so vividly? Partly because of the storm that is beating outside the chapel. We are never allowed to forget this storm. It shrieks and drives about us as we enter the chapel, it pelts the door from without, it howls between the hymn and the sermon, it appears to "add new power to the preacher, who, when describing Jonah's sea-storm, seemed tossed by a storm himself." The effect of all this is to redouble the solemn intimacy of the scene. The chapel is cut off from the world like the cabin of a ship; our minds are focused with an almost painful intensity upon the visible and audible facts that immediately surround us.

I have dwelt on this episode because it shows with what deliberate art Melville has ensnared his readers. To turn now to the work as a whole: how carefully, with what prevision, he has built up the general scheme: the pitch of the book, the "mystery" of the White Whale, the character of Captain Ahab. First of all, the pitch: with what a mighty rhythm the "Pequod" starts on its voyage:

> Ship and boat diverged; the cold, damp night breeze blew between; a screaming gull flew overhead; the two hulls wildly rolled; we gave three heavy-hearted cheers, and blindly plunged like fate into the lone Atlantic.

There we have the note of the saga; and this is consistently sustained by a dozen different means. Take the portraits of the three mates, Starbuck, Stubb and Flask, "momentous men" all; and the three fantastic harpooneers, the cannibal Queequeg, Tashtego, the Gay Head Indian, and Daggoo, the gigantic Negro. By a process of simplification that heightens their effect without removing it from reality, Melville invests these characters with a semblance as of Homer's minor heroes:

Daggoo retained all his barbaric virtues, and erect as a giraffe, moved about the decks in all the pomp of six feet five in his socks. There was a corporeal humility in looking up at him; and a white man standing before him seemed a white flag come to beg truce of a fortress.

[Tashtego.] To look at the tawny brown of his lithe snaky limbs, you would almost have credited the superstitions of some of the earlier Puritans, and half believed this wild Indian to be a son of the Prince of the Powers of the Air.

This method of characterization, indeed, prevails throughout the book. Take the captain of the "Jeroboam," for instance:

A long-skirted, cabalistically cut coat of a faded walnut tinge enveloped him; the overlapping sleeves of which were rolled up on his wrists. A deep, settled, fanatic delirium was in his eyes.

We are living from beginning to end in a world by one degree larger than life. The constant mythological allusions, the sweep of the style, the bold splendour of the similes support this impression, till at last the battles with the whales begin and we feel beneath the book the very pulse of the ocean itself. "Give me a condor's wing!" Melville exclaims in the excitement of his inspiration. "Give me Vesuvius's crater for an inkstand!" And then he adds, proudly conscious of his achievement: "Such, and so magnifying, is the virtue of a large and liberal theme! We expand to its bulk. To produce a mighty book, you must choose a mighty theme."

No less extraordinary is the development of the legend of "Moby-Dick," of the sense of impending fatality. Towards the end it may be thought that Melville strains a point or two in order to produce this latter effect. I am thinking especially of the chapter in which the sea-hawk darts away with Ahab's hat; but the chapters on the "candles" and the needle are open to the same objection. There is an electrical storm and the corposants appear on the yardarms; and soon afterwards it is found that the compasses have been turned. All these phenomena are natural, but they are certainly exceptional; and, occurring so close together, they seem to me to overshoot their mark, which is, of course, to inform the reader that the calamitous whale is approaching. Machinery of this kind is much more in place in works like "The Ancient Mariner" that frankly embody supernatural elements. But consider, at the outset of the book, the apparition of Elijah. Consider that astonishing chapter on the whiteness of the whale. Consider the reports of Moby-Dick that come to us, one after another, from the sailors, from wandering sea-captains encountered during the voyage, from the mad

Gabriel of the “Jeroboam,” from the captain of the “Samuel Enderby” whose arm the monster has torn away as he tore away Ahab’s leg. The fabulous whale torments our imagination till we, like Gabriel, think of him as “no less a being than the Shaker God incarnated”; and all this, be it noted, without a word of direct description on Melville’s part. Until he reveals himself just before the chase, we see Moby-Dick solely through the consequences of his actions and the eyes of superstitious men.

I should like to linger over another aspect of the fabulous element of the book—fabulous but entirely consonant with reality. I mean the theme of the “five dusky phantoms” who appear midway in the story, suddenly surrounding Ahab and as if “fresh formed out of air.” We get our first hint of their existence in the dark words of Elijah, when Ishmael and Queequeg encounter him near the wharf in the grey dawn:

> But he stole up to us again, and suddenly clapping his hand on my shoulder, said, “Did ye see anything looking like men going toward that ship a while ago?”
>
> Struck by this plain matter-of-fact question, I answered, saying, “Yes, I thought I did see four or five men; but it was too dim to be sure.”
>
> “Very dim, very dim,” said Elijah. “Morning to ye.”
>
> Once more we quitted him; but once more he came softly after us; and touching my shoulder again, said, “See if you can find ’em now, will ye?”
>
> “Find who?”
>
> “Morning to ye! Morning to ye!” he rejoined, again moving off.

Later, on the voyage, Stubb remarks that Captain Ahab is always disappearing at night: “Who’s made appointments with him in the hold? Ain’t that queer, now?” These vaguely defined Orientals are satisfactorily accounted for as the story moves on; but they remain dim, and their presence and their dimness and the pale, opalescent light that emanates from them spread I can hardly say what magic through the book. It is to be observed, moreover, that all this fantasy in “Moby-Dick” has behind it everywhere a substantial fabric of fact: that is why we never feel that we are reading a romantic novel, why, even at the most extravagant moments, we accept every detail as veracious. There were actually to be seen, in the Nantucket of the ’forties, such figures as Queequeg and Fedallah, just as there were old “fighting Quakers, Quakers with a vengeance,” lords of whales like Bildad and Peleg, with their “thousand bold dashes of character, not unworthy a Scandinavian sea-king, or a poetical pagan Roman.” We can

trace the whole story, trunk, branches and twigs, back to the scene out of which it springs, and which we feel between the lines, just as we can trace the Arabian genie back to Aladdin's lamp; and this, by enabling us to compare the fact with the treatment, inevitably and immensely heightens the effect of the latter.

Of Captain Ahab I should never stop talking if I once began. But here again, to recur to the aspect of the book upon which I have been dwelling, how admirable is Melville's power of construction. "Ahab's soul's a centipede that moves upon a hundred legs." So he himself asseverates, in the midst of the chase; and this character of a "mighty pageant creature, formed for noble tragedies" is developed and sustained with uncanny adroitness. First we are presented with the other captains who give us the scale of the Nantucket whale-masters in general. Then we see him through a cloud of strange rumours, and not till the ship is well at sea does he appear at all. Suddenly he emerges; he stands on the quarter-deck, and Melville describes him minutely in a magnificent passage. Then he vanishes again, to remain omnipresent but only intermittently visible, the soul, the brain, the will of the ship, and in the end the embodiment of a bedevilled humanity. We are never permitted to become familiar with him: he is never mentioned, he never appears, indeed, save to the accompaniment of some superb phrase, some new majestic image. He is a "grand, ungodly, godlike man," a "good man—not a pious good man, like Bildad, but a swearing good man"; he is a "khan of the plank, a king of the sea, and a great lord of leviathans"; he "lives in the world as the last of the grizzly bears lived in settled Missouri." It can fairly be said that by the time the chase begins, Ahab is as mighty and terrible a figure in our minds as Moby-Dick himself. The two fabulous characters have grown, by similar means, side by side.

Much more might be said of the form of the book—of the shredded Shakespearean drama, for example, the scraps and fragments of which, among other diverse elements, have been pressed into the moving mass of the narrative. But I can not attempt to develop these points. "The great task of an artist," said Taine, "is to find subjects which suit his talent." Melville had this good fortune once and once only; but his masterpiece is worth more than libraries of lesser books. "Moby-Dick" is our sole American epic, no less an epic for being written in prose; and has it been observed that it revives in a sense the theme of the most ancient epic of the English-

speaking peoples? Grendel in “Beowulf” might almost be described as the prototype of the White Whale. Was not Grendel also the symbol of “all that most maddens and torments, all that stirs up the lees of things, all truth with malice in it, all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain, all the subtle demonisms of life and thought, all evil—visibly personified”?

V. W. B. 16. v. 23.

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[1] “Essays: Irish and American.” John Butler Yeats. With an appreciation by “Æ.” New York: The Macmillan Company.

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